

ROSELLA,

OR

MODERN OCCURRENCES.

A NOVEL.

A Novel

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

BY

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AUTHOR OF PHEDORA, &c.

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ROSELLA.

CHAP. I.

A Scot cozened—a Journey renewed.

THE people of the house, alarmed by her cries, ran into the room, and when they heard her tale, believed that her mistress had been robbed; without recollecting that one of the supposed collectors was Mr. Craufurd, whom they well knew, and whom they had seen both at his entrance and his departure. However, the most pressing investigation at this moment appeared to be, that of learning if the poor terrified young lady was in a state to profit by their assistance; and for a long time the point was a

very doubtful one. Yet at length Rosella revived—revived to lament, with bitter agony, the heavy cloud now obscuring the destiny of her first, her last, and only friend; for thus, in the deep affliction and anguish of the instant, she repeatedly apostrophized Miss Beauclerc.

The crowd in her apartment attracting her attention, after the more immediate ebullition of grief was past, she entreated to be left with Nancy, and her request was complied with.

Rosella would then have flown to the house of the unfeeling Mr. Craufurd, in the hope of beholding her ill-fated friend once more, and taking, perhaps, a last farewell of her; but Nancy represented so forcibly the lateness of the hour, and the little probability of their being permitted to see her poor dear mistress, that she unwillingly deferred the effort: and Nancy added, that to be sure her Lady must for certain be tied down



down in her bed, with a strait-waistcoat on, such as old John Mills used to wear, or the devil himself could not have made her stay with such people.

This afflicting image drew a torrent of tears from the eyes of Rosella, who sobbed on the bosom of her inconsiderate attendant, now her only support;—but she could not be persuaded to undress herself, nor even to lie down upon a bed; and the watchful reflections of the long and comfortless night often threw her into a fresh agony, at the moment Nancy fancied she was sinking to repose.

The sun had scarcely risen, when she resolved to ask admittance into the house where she imagined Miss Beauclerc was still forcibly detained. What her sensations must have been—what they must yet be, at a treatment so unlooked-for, and offensive to a spirit for some time past unused to control of any kind, she shuddered to think of!

and the loss of her own fame, and her present forlorn situation, weighed light in the balance, against so deadly a blight as the double loss of reason and of liberty.

The people around Rosella, softened by her distress, of which they now comprehended the real cause, treated her with civility and attention, in spite of the whisperings of suspicion, that their interest would not be much forwarded by the complaisance to which they were irresistibly impelled; and they suffered her to quit the house unmolested, though they were not certain she would leave in it a sufficient security for the payment of their demand; as Nancy, in her terror and agitation, had asserted that the poor dear creature was stripped of every thing she had in the world.

Rosella soon found herself at Mr. Crauford's door, and remembering the cruel artifice which had induced her the day before to leave it without being accompanied by
Miss

Miss Beauclerc, she felt her indignation almost equal to her affliction. She had not, in the perturbation of her mind, reflected upon the unusual earliness of the hour, and waited a considerable time before Nancy could persuade her that no person in the house was stirring.

When she became at length convinced of this, she preferred beguiling her impatience, by enjoying, as far as her anxious solicitude would permit her, the freshness of the morning breeze, rather than return to the inn; and when her watch informed her that it was nearly eight, she could no longer restrain it, but hastily flew back to Mr. Craufurd's, and again with trembling eagerness applied for admission.

A servant opened the door, and to her request to see his master or his Lady, replied that he believed his maister was not at home, and his maistress was engaged; but he wad luk.

“ Tell them,” said Rosella, following him a few steps into the passage, “ that I entreat they will see me ; for I have very important——”

The fellow, without attending to her, entered a sitting-room, and spoke in a low tone ; she soon discovered to whom, for the voice of the lady of the mansion was very distinctly heard to reply—

“ She can't have any thing to say to me—I know nothing of her ; and I desire you will not trouble your master, for he can do her no service, so it's in vain for her to think of it : if she wants charity, let her go to her gentlemen for charity.—But do you keep an eye upon her, Andrew, for she's pretty revengeful.—It's not a week ago, Sir,” addressing herself apparently to another person in the room, “ that the girl gave an appointment to three young fellows of fashion, and then set them together by the ears, and while they were scuffling, she watched her opportunity,

opportunity, and pushed one of them, whom she did not like, down a craig, where he was almost killed."

"What you have uttered, Madam," said Rosella, advancing into the room, "is a cruel and malicious misrepresentation; by whom it has been thus related to you I can, I believe, guess. But I merely came here to enquire for my poor friend, and to conjure Mr. Craufurd to permit me to see her once more."

"Andrew," exclaimed the indignant gentlewoman, "why did you suffer her——"

"Your servant is not to blame," interrupted Rosella; "will you, Madam, attend to my entreaty?"

She made some contemptuous reply, which Rosella heard not; for the gentleman whom she had not yet regarded, hastily advanced, and taking her hand, in a manner that displayed respect and solicitude—

"I have," said he, "already preferred the same request, and this woman asserts that Miss Beauclerc has been removed."

"Mr. Oberne!" exclaimed Rosella, on recognizing the person she had hitherto overlooked: "Oh for Heaven's sake! prevail with her to let me see my unhappy friend, though but for a moment!"

"No, Miss," retorted Mrs. Craufurd, "the *woman*, as he is pleased to call me, will not stir a peg for your vagaries; and since you have forced yourself in, where you have no business, I shall tell you that you have no occasion to wait here upon your pretences.—And, Miss, the next time I go out, remember I shall take care you don't take my place at the head of my table, and eat your fill at my cost!—*Woman* truly!"

"Devil then," cried Oberne, in a rage, "since that suits you better!"

Rosella shrunk from such a contention, and giving up the hope of again beholding Miss Beauclerc, was retiring in great dejection,

tion, when the servant came in, and informed his Lady that her presence was required immediately in the office.

She flounced away, muttering something wholly unintelligible; and Oberne, detaining Rosella, asked the man in which apartment the lady was, who came the day before in a post-chaise with Miss Montresor?

“The leddy was ta’en awa last neight by her kinsmon and twa keepers,” was the reply.

“Keepers!” repeated Rosella, turning pale, “what does he mean?”

“Attendants,” replied Oberne hastily, to prevent any other explanation.

Mrs. Craufurd now returned to them with a countenance wholly changed; and condescending to beg pardon for the little heat she had been in, proceeded, unasked, to confirm the assertion of Andrew, by assuring Rosella that her poor, dear, in-

sane friend had been hurried away from her house by her violent cousin, who would not hear a word from her or Mr. Craufurd, though they both begged she might be indulged in her repeated entreaty to be suffered to send her purse to Miss Montresor, whom she called her beloved and unfortunate girl.

A loud hem from an adjoining room, which was only separated by a slight partition, stopped the loquacity of the lady; and she was endeavouring to retract the information she had too unguardedly let fall, when Oberne, irritated by her duplicity and previous insolence, interrupted her.

“ Well, Madam,” said he, “ I will now only repeat to you, that if I find Miss Montresor has been robbed of any part of her wardrobe, or that she misses any one of her trinkets, or any of her property, Mr. Craufurd shall be responsible for her loss.”

“ Rob-

“ Robbed !” reiterated Mrs. Craufurd, “ good Lord ! I hope not—I hope the poor dear young lady has not been robbed—that would be sad indeed after such a misfortune ! But, Sir—good Sir, how can you make poor dear Mr. Craufurd responsible ?”

“ He perfectly understands by what means he is so,” replied Oberne, “ since his accomplice has disappeared.”

“ His accomplice ! my good gentleman, Mr. Bristock is no accomplice of his.”

“ Then he is an accomplice of Mr. Bristock, and that is the same thing.—My dear Miss Montresor, you appear indisposed ; let me conduct you from this place.”

Rosella accompanied him in silence, and he attended her to the inn, where Nancy, who had been rejoiced to see him, related all their grievances ; and repeated what she had told to every body who would listen to her, that the depredators had carried off Miss Montresor's trunk, with her ear-rings, and necklace, and bracelets, and every thing.”

“ I have already heard of this villany,” replied Oberne, with indignation; “ and that scoundrel Craufurd shall repent his atrocity !”

Rosella, who had not been sensible of the transaction, looked over the remnant of their baggage, and found that Nancy’s intelligence was true. The trunk was a small one, and had contained all her ornaments, the gifts of her unhappy friend, some of which were rather valuable. She recollected too, that she had put a five pound note into the box, which, except three or four guineas, was all the money she possessed; and for the first time her affliction would permit her to think solely of herself: she found that it would be utterly impossible to reach London without an immediate application to her guardian, nor did she imagine it would prevent her from the too probable mortification of being penniless in a place where she was a stranger.

Oberne

Oberne saw her distress, and attempted to relieve it by assuring her he would oblige Mr. Craufurd to refund the value of the things taken from her, unless Mr. Bristock restored them.

But this was little consolation to Rosella, who was anxious to begin her long journey, and dreaded, with tenacious delicacy, the offer of a pecuniary loan on his part, should he discover the slenderness of her finances. Nancy too, whatever consolation she might derive from her attentions and attachment at such a moment, she felt to be an additional source of inquietude; for she was sensible she ought to be sent back to her aunt, lest Mr. Ellinger should refuse to consider her but as the servant of Miss Beauclerc, and refuse to pay the wages due to her, or be responsible for the expences of her journey. But she could not follow the dictates of her judgment and her probity, even by stripping herself of her last guinea; and overcome by
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the most cruel and harassing reflections, she threw herself on a chair, and wept bitterly.

Oberne was much affected, and reiterated his offers of service.

“Command me, dearest Rosella,” said he; “will you commission me to hasten to England with the information of your disaster?—shall I send my servant with a letter to any of your friends?—will you permit me to write in your name, as you are too much indisposed to undertake it?—Tell me what I shall do.”

“Nothing, nothing,” replied she, her heart dying within her; “do not trouble yourself any further about me.—Pray leave me!”

“I will,” said Oberne, “after I have seen you eat some breakfast. You will be seriously ill, sitting up, as I understand you did, all night, and now taking no nourishment.”

“Lord!

“ Lord ! who told you that ? ” exclaimed Nancy, suddenly imagining he dealt a little in witchcraft.

“ I called here,” returned he, “ a few minutes after you had left the house this morning, and having heard a detail of the misfortune of poor Miss Beauclerc, I was directed to Mr. Craufurd, as a person with whom she had transacted some business, and who was accessory to her removal.”

The breakfast Oberne had ordered as he entered the house, was now introduced, and Rosella drank some tea, that she might not appear obstinate and ungrateful for his solitude ; and finding herself rather revived from the effort, she sat down to inform Mr. Ellinger of her uncomfortable and improper situation. But in describing its extreme desolation, she suddenly recollected the aunt of Miss Beauclerc, who resided at Dumfries, and that the letters of her poor friend had more than once mentioned her as the solace of the whole family at Avelines.

This fortunate remembrance cheered her with a hope of immediate relief from her difficulties ; and, as Oberne had not yet left the room, she made him acquainted with the consoling idea she had just started. He was pleased to see her look less despondingly, and entreating that she would not fail to take some rest in the course of the morning, he left her to pursue his threatened plan respecting Mr. Craufurd.

Rosella then began a second letter to her guardian, in which she repeated the picture of her situation ; but told him she should proceed to Dumfries with Miss Beauclerc's woman, who had been left with her, where she hoped to obtain the protection of her poor friend's aunt, Mrs. Delaval, and where she trusted he would send her his instructions and a proper remittance. She would also have given an account of herself to Mr. Mordaunt ; but his silence to her application, after the ill success of Mr. Ellinger's recall,

recall, which she construed into anger or contempt, withheld her.

She had neglected to order any dinner, either for herself or Nancy ; but Oberne had been more considerate, and as she was deliberating whether she ought not immediately to begin her journey to Dumfries, that her expences might not exceed her purse, Nancy entered to present the compliments of Mr. Oberne, and to know if she was at leisure to receive him.

Rosella thought she was not acting prudently in assenting to this request ; but his anxiety for her welfare, his earnestness to relieve her from embarrassment, and the perpetual proofs of respect and esteem he was so eager to give, chased every idea of reserve and coldness, and she consented to see him.

He appeared with a countenance of alacrity, and told her he had obtained from
Mr.

Mr. Craufurd a promise to restore, or cause to be restored, the valuables, of which she had been so brutally deprived; and, as a pledge of the fulfilment of this engagement, he entreated Miss Montresor would draw upon him for any sum she might have immediate occasion for.

Rosella thanked Oberne for his friendly interference; but she could not prevail upon herself to profit by the forced acknowledgment of the prudent Scot, which indeed she much doubted the truth of, and thought it a delicate expedient of Oberne to supply her with the money requisite for travelling. And thus far she was right, that could he not have succeeded with Mr. Craufurd, he had intended to have made use of the same pretext to have advanced her a sum sufficient to have taken her to London.

But this gude gentleman, with all his coolness and artifice, had suffered himself to be hurried into an imprudence by the still
more

more wily Mr. Bristock, who had presented him a retaining fee of fifty pounds, to ensure his assistance in securing the person of his insane relation; and the terrified agent, trembling lest he should be too suddenly called upon for the vouchers of the expenditure of those sums he had received for the purchase of the land, and the building and fitting up of the cottage, which indeed were of a scandalous magnitude, was willing to secure the friendship of the heir, who had brought with him attestations of his identity, and a copy of his deceased uncle's will. So he walked very passively in the path chalked out for him, because he had heard from Guairdy of the positive derangement of his client; and though his cautious soul shrunk from the violence he was a party in, he still supposed himself safe on every side; as he thought Rosella a destitute orphan, for such Mr. Bristock had represented her, without a single friend or protector, save the one now torn from her.

He

He had accompanied Miss Beauclerc and her unfeeling cousin the first stage on their way to the south ; because the gentleman was desirous of the credit of Mr. Craufurd's presence, that no effort of the prisoner to obtain assistance against the outrage she sustained, should retard his journey, or hazard the failure of his scheme. But, contrary to the expectation of both, when she found resistance vain, she wept bitterly, but at length submitted to her destiny ; and her inexorable heir then dismissed Maister Craufurd, telling him at parting, to arrange all his papers relative to the cursed business of the Scotch purchase, and transmit them, per next post, to his address ; and that he supposed the fifty pounds he had left in his hands, would be sufficient to answer every demand for housekeeping, &c. the few days Miss Beauclerc had remained at her new residence.—And thus, according to the old adage, the Devonshire hero “ maun ha got oop betimes, and ha ta'en auld scratch for his coonsfellow.”

When

When Oberne, the Hon. Mr. Oberne, was announced to him, demanding intelligence of Miss Beauclerc, and appearing, as a previous note had expressed, in behalf of her young friend, Mr. Craufurd, just returned from his excursion in a state of infinite discomfort, put off the task of receiving him to his weef; and she, good woman, laboring very hard to prove the poor ladies to be the very worst of their species, was finishing the portrait of Rosella, when Andrew peeped into the room, and said she was in the passage.

Such a *mal à propos* interruption very naturally excited her choler; and her husband, roused from a deep reverie by the exertion of her lungs, sent for her out to drop the hasty hint that so expeditiously altered her tone.

It was not very surprising that Rosella, ignorant of all this, should suspect Oberne of endeavoring to force a friendly imposition

sition upon her ; and he protested in vain against the injustice of her supposition, till he offered to bring Mr. Craufurd to her, to ascertain the truth of what he affirmed.—Rosella still, however, declined the expedient, telling him she had little doubt of obtaining shelter and protection of Mrs. Delaval.

“ To Dumfries then I will accompany you,” replied Oberne ; “ and, should your expectations deceive you, you will at least have a resource in this man’s proposition to repair some part of his villany.”

Rosella would have opposed his attendance when she solicited the countenance of Miss Beauclerc’s aunt ; for some of the old lady’s letters expressed a strong horror of the wiles, the perfidies, and ingratitude of men, against whom she hoped her niece, being a timid young woman, would preserve herself by prayer, faith, and fasting.

But

But Rosella had a double disinclination to overcome in dismissing Oberne—his and her own : for he had in truth made himself an interest in her heart by a series of good offices and attentions, the source of which could not have been mistaken, even had not his parting information at Lufs opened her eyes to his sentiments. He had told her that their acquaintance had begun in a moment of frolic on his side ; and he had told her too, that it had been prolonged from a far different motive. The conduct of Miss Beauclerc in encouraging his assiduities, had flattered his vanity—that of Rosella in repressing them, had excited his esteem ; and of those reports so injurious to her, he better than any one knew the cruel fallacy, and they called at once for his indignation and tenderest compassion. But these very reports, false as they were, operated as a motive to check any further avowal of his particular admiration, and his declining fortune was a still more powerful one.

The

The vague fluctuation of his views, however, could not influence his conduct; and the affection he resolved to overcome, became each day more progressive. When he parted from Rosella at Lufs, he might have succeeded in forgetting that he had experienced a more than common interest for her, had not a letter from Mr. Lesley, which reached him at Edinburgh, whither he had returned, aroused his resentment and solicitude in her behalf. It plainly expressed all that the writer had insinuated to Rosella herself, and demanded to know if their separation were lasting or temporary.

Oberne flew to answer the enquiry in person, and vindicate the character of the young woman, whose prudent reserve and modesty of deportment had so ill-merited the conclusions drawn from the indiscretions of her older friend.

At Guairdy, he learned, with the calamity that was supposed to have overtaken Miss Beauclerc,

Beauclerc, the extravagance of that conduct which, in some measure, justified the surmises of his friend Lesley; and when the offender professed his concern at having added to the distress of mind Rosella endured, the interview had become an amicable one, and he had voluntarily proposed to ride over to the cottage, to exculpate Oberne from having in the least authorized his impertinence—a step he privately assured Mr. Estcourt, solely dictated by the curiosity he experienced to learn upon what terms the lady and her champion were.

Rosella was so anxious to proceed to Dumfries, that she could scarcely be persuaded to remain where she was, until the dinner Oberne had ordered made its appearance; and then she found it so much more sumptuous than she, from inclination and necessity, would have thought of, that her appetite was entirely lost in the secret calculation she made of the too probable amount of the expence.

When the tedious meal was ended, from which of course Oberne was not to be excluded, she withdrew to her chamber, and sent Nancy to ask for the bill, which she was apprehensive he would think it necessary to discharge. But he had already done so; and Rosella, much chagrined, re-entered the eating-room to expostulate with him on the subject.

“Do you think,” said Oberne, gravely, “I would chuse to live at your expence?”

“Suffer me to retort that question,” replied she; “indeed you have much hurt me by acting thus.”

“I am sorry for it,” returned he; “but I must persist in my error, if an error it is, unless you will compromise the dispute by accepting the proposition of Mr. Craufurd.”

“I had a small note in the box,” said Rosella, “and if he will send another of equal value, until I hear from my guardian, I will venture to take it, without fearing to incur my own censure, or that of others.”

“No,”

“No,” cried Oberne, “I will not allow this. You shall not receive less than will enable you to await a reply to your letter, or carry you to London; you may then adopt which plan you find the most eligible.”

She would further have objected, but he would not hear her, and went immediately to Mr. Craufurd to settle the affair to his own satisfaction. That gude gentleman, extremely provoked at the turn things had taken, and fearful of being reduced to an unpleasant dilemma, thought proper to express a great abhorrence of the inhumanity of Mr. Bristock.

“Of his villany, say rather,” said Oberne indignantly; “the insanity of his cousin has involved a most amiable young lady in distress and embarrassment, to say nothing further; and this atrocious monster adds to both, by robbing her, with unheard-of brutality, of all her cash and valuables!”

“Cash !” repeated Maister Craufurd, looking aghast, “did the box which the young leddy misses, contain cash ?—But perhaps she had it in charge for Miss Booclar ?”

“No,” exclaimed Oberne, in a loud key, “she had it in charge from her guardian for her own use.”

“Aah !” ejaculated the accomplice, dropping his jaw in surprise and consternation, “her guardian ! has the young leddy a guardian ?—My gude Sir, Maister Brafastick maun repent what he has done !—The mon has left in my honds a fifty poond nawte, without expressing hoo it is to be applied ; and I do nae ken hoo it can be applied better than in relieving the young leddy fra her deeficulties.”

“Certainly it cannot,” replied Oberne, “and you had better place it in her *honds*, and wash your own of so dark a business.”

Mr. Craufurd said he should be reeght glad to do so, and followed his impetuous conductor to the inn, where Rosella awaited him,

him, who heard, with extreme surprise, that he meant to offer her fifty pounds for her immediate use. But she would not by any means consent to receive it, either as a loan or an indemnification ; and after much argument and persuasion, could only be induced to accept half the sum, which she acknowledged in writing to have received of Mr. Craufurd.

After this affair was settled, Rosella, eager to quit a place rendered hateful to her, and still more earnest to shelter herself under the protection of Mrs. Delaval, reimbursed Oberne for her share of the expences at the inn, and was assisted by him into the chaise she had ordered. She bade him farewell, and he returned it ; but not with an air as if he meant the adieu should be a long one, and she felt anxious to know if he followed her.

“ Perhaps,” thought she, “ he now thinks he has done enough to serve me ; yet

he said he would accompany me to Dumfries. It is better however that he should not—Mrs. Delaval would perhaps be rendered suspicious by such a circumstance, were she to discover it, and refuse to receive me.”

Yet, though she internally settled that the absence of Oberne would be quite desirable, she was not displeased to catch a glimpse of his figure when she rested for the night.—She rose early the next morning, intending to travel the first stage before breakfast; but Nancy was very unwilling to move without her's, and Rosella, who fancied Oberne was interested in the circumstance, altered her intention.

Nor was she mistaken : he applied for the honor of attending her *déjeuné* ; and, as he had had the delicacy to forbear even announcing his vicinity to her the evening before, she would not disappoint his expectation.

With

With much complacency on either side, they parted ; and the conduct Oberne had adopted, appeared to be now tacitly agreed to by Rosella, who saw him no more until the following morning, when he again breakfasted with her at Bield ; and she would not let this opportunity pass, the only one perhaps she might have, without acknowledging, with much gratitude, the services he had rendered her.

“ We will not talk in this style,” interrupted he ; “ besides, I intend to learn how your expectations are realized by the old damsel at Dumfries, before I finally quit you.”

“ But I fear,” said Rosella, “ your appearance alone will frustrate my hopes with Mrs. Delaval.”

“ I shall not appear,” he replied, “ at least in your suite ; but you must allow me to concert with Nancy some method of discovering your destination. If the good old lady should receive you kindly, I will immediately

mediately bid you farewell ; if she should not, you will then, perhaps, take my advice in what manner you may most safely pursue your journey ; and I will give you the best a moderate capacity, and more than moderate good wishes, can suggest."

CHAP. II.

Domestic Subordination—and domestic Discipline.

IT was little more than one o'clock when she entered Dumfries ; and having recollected that Mrs. Delaval lived with a family, named Macdoual, she soon discovered their abode, and drove immediately to the house. It was a neat little mansion, and every thing about it seemed, as Nancy said, in such
grand

grand apple-pie order, that it gave Rosella a strong idea of that extreme attention to cleanliness and form, which usually excludes ease and rest.

The arrival of a carriage at the door, occasioned the same kind of motion in this prim box, which a child gives to the contents of its rattle: half-a-dozen girls, "bull-faced and freckled fair," ran from window to window, and their voices, dancing in alt upon a Scotch cadence, were distinctly heard by Rosella. A lassie, whose claithing was in the modern style, that is, so scanty that "if it had been less, 'twould have been none at all," peeped fra the hedge at sic a bonny sight, and little thought that Nancy, the gayer leddy of the twa, was like herself a servant.

At length another personage appeared, a good-humoured looking, little, fat woman, who scudded towards the visitors in a manner that demonstrated an unseen battle be-

tween constitutional civility and constitutional corns; and Rosella returning her salutation, said, she understood that Mrs. Delaval resided at the house, and begged to know if she might be permitted to speak to her.

“ Ah poor dear creature !” returned the lady, who was Mrs. Macdoual herself, “ she has fell down, and bruised her leg sadly, so she can’t come out to see you; but would you chuse to walk in and see her; for she sets in her great chair, dear good soul, all day long without stirring, only to go to bed, and eat her dinner.”

Rosella, who could not perfectly understand, by this harangue, the rank and situation of the speaker, descended from the chaise; and chusing to err by too much condescension rather than by too little, entreated the lady to excuse the liberty she took in conveying by her a letter to Mrs. Delaval.—A letter she had previously written,

ten, that she might not have to perform the awkward ceremony of announcing herself and her business.

“ I hope no bad news ! ” returned the little dame, endeavouring to look solemn. “ You come from England, Miss ? aye, so do I—we’re countrywomen ;—but you look too pretty and good-natured to bring us bad news. Perhaps,” she continued, with an air of importance, “ the niece is dead, as well as the rest of ’em.”

“ No, Madam,” said Rosella, with a faddened mien ; “ but I must refer Mrs. Delaval to the letter.”

“ Mither,” hallooed a rude voice, “ why dinna ye come in, when Maistress Deelaval screams oot for ye to gang tul her ? ”

“ I’m coming, Jannie, I’m coming,” cried the mother, running off in a great hurry.

Rosella then remained standing by the side of the chaise, gazed at only by distant
c 6 spectators,

spectators, who seemed afraid of venturing too near ; and she augured little good from such a scene.

In the interim, a very tall, bony, rigid-looking man advanced to her, and demanded her business ; adding, in a tone as solemn as if he meant to pursue the whole Church Catechism—

“ And what’s yere nem ? ”

Rosella informed him, fully expecting that “ Wha gave ye that nem ? ” would certainly follow ; and the question would have been more appropriate than she had any idea of ; but the Fates decreed that the next interrogation should be—

“ Wha d’ye luk for here ? ”

“ I wait in the hope of seeing Mrs. Delaval,” replied she ; “ I have sent in a letter for her perusal.”

“ Fra

“ Fra whom ? ” said the questioner.

Rosella was embarrassed ;—a letter from herself, brought in person, was so like the expedient of a beggar of alms, that she hesitated ; and the tall personage, with a severe frown, quitted her abruptly, and walked into the house, exhibiting, as he turned his back, a pair of tremendous shoulder-bones, that marked, by their alternate elevation, every step he took.

“ What next ? ” thought Rosella, very much tired of such a procedure.

“ I do suppose,” exclaimed Nancy, “ them pipple means us to stay here till night-fall.”

After another five minutes, the little fat gentlewoman again hobbled out.

“ Well, my dear,” cried she, “ so you have been in a fine sea of troubles ?—So
Mr.

Mr. Macdoual has been speaking to you ;—but never mind him—we never care for his cross looks, not we—if we can but get shut of him half an hour now and then, then we enjoy ourselves.”

“ Does Mrs. Delaval chuse to see me ?” asked Rosella.

“ Yes, my dear, yes ; I came to tell you to come in.”

So saying, the talkative dame again tacked about, followed by the guest thus curiously invited. Rosella expected to be reminded to wipe the dust from her shoes, and perform all these ceremonies required in a mansion kept like a cabinet ;—what then must have been her surprise to find the inside of the house correspond so little with the exterior, as to make her imagine she had missed the entrance, and plunged by mistake into the piggery !

The children of the family thrust their ragged heads through some half-opened
doors

doors to survey her more narrowly, whilst the gown of her conductress hooked, by means of a rent already made in it, to a lock which was hanging by one screw, belonging to the room where Mrs. Delaval was sitting, and completed a fracture from one end of the skirt to the other.

“ Here, my dear love,” said the airy housewife, scarcely regarding the disaster, “ here is the young lady !”

And she then introduced Rosella to a woman apparently between fifty and sixty, of a middle height, slender, neat, and old-fashioned, with pellucid grey eyes, and cheeks like the shrivelled but rosy skin of a blighted peach ; her nose exhibited a blue purple tint, that marked health undermined, and her whole aspect spoke little of the character to which it belonged, except that a trait of resignation and benevolence sometimes insinuated itself amidst the vacuum.

“ You

"You are Miss Montresor," said she, after a pause, in which Rosella was painfully agitated.

"Yes, Madam."

Mrs. Delaval attempted to rise to receive her.

"My dear love, pray sit still," cried her little bustling friend, "I have told Miss Mounteresa that you have fallen upon an accident—there, there, sit ye down!"

The good lady obeyed without a comment, and Rosella finding that she was expected immediately to furnish topics for a conversation, having been pulled into a rickety chair by the mistress of the mansion, began to enlarge upon the information her letter had slightly touched upon.

"My poor niece!" exclaimed Mrs. Delaval, and the tears started into her eyes; those of Rosella fell upon her cheeks.

"Come,

“Come, come, my dear creature,” said the fat personage, whom Rosella had now discovered to be Mrs. Macdoual, “you must not vex yourself; consider your poor health. There, do not now,” turning to the guest, “say any more;—this love will fret herself into a fever if you do.”

Rosella waited to hear this admonition approved by Mrs. Delaval; but she sat very quietly expecting another topic to be started, and Rosella then ventured to entreat her protection and countenance until she received instructions from her guardian for her return to England.

Mrs. Delaval appeared disconcerted by this request, and her friend seemed equally uneasy and undecided what reply to make. They looked several times at each other before Mrs. Delaval could frame an answer that would neither encourage the petitioner to hope an acquiescence with her demand,

demand, nor yet exhibit a semblance of inhumanity, very far from her heart.

“Why, my dear—I can’t say,” hesitated the good lady, “I can—very readily—for here poor Mrs. Macdoul has a house quite full. God knows, there is hardly room for me, only she won’t turn me out, now I’m in a strange country.”

There was such an appearance of simplicity in her countenance whilst she made this explanation, and Rosella had so often heard that the whole interest of her fortune, which was nearly twenty thousand pounds, was almost entirely swallowed up by this family, that she could not feel angry at an imbecility which had no mixture of selfish hypocrisy in it.

“Will you allow me to say, Madam,” said she, “that as I cannot have the good fortune of receiving shelter under the same roof with you, it would very much serve me,

me, if I might be permitted the sanction of your name and character, in seeking accommodation in any house in the neighbourhood, where a vicinity to you and Mrs. Macdoul's family would ensure me attention and respect."

The consternation of the two ladies was increased by this proposition; and Rosella began to despair of obtaining any civility or favor from Mrs. Delaval, who muttered that she was sorry she could not always do what she wished.

"God knows," continued she, in rather a louder key, "I am as economical as I can be;—you see, my dear, I wear a coloured linen gown and a stuff petticoat, to save washing, and yet, somehow, I can scarcely make both ends meet. And poor Mrs. Macdoul here, she denies herself every thing; so I am obliged to get a hamper of wine now and then—that is an extravagance certainly; but, poor thing, I can't see her drop

drop for want of a little nourishment ;—and then the poor children, they must go to school to be a little like others when they go out in the world, though their father thinks it is not necessary, and God knows they are wild enough now, as it is !—But it is so cruel to see children pine for a little education, and not get it, somehow.—And then, as poor dear Mrs. Macdoual says, men are so ignorant of what is wanted in the kitchen, and what must be had of household linen and clothes, and extras, that it grieves one to think a friend should be distressed.”

“ Ah, God help me !” exclaimed the lady of the house, “ I don’t know where I should have been now, if I had not had a dear good friend ; Mr. Macdoual is so harsh ; and indeed, my dear Miss, that is partly the reason we cannot have you here.—I hope you won’t think me unkind——”

“ Pray, Madam,” interrupted Rosella, “ do not imagine such a request is necessary ; but I believe Mrs. Delaval mistakes my meaning.—I have a supply of money for
lodging

lodging and accommodation ; I merely entreat to be recommended to a family of credit and respectability, and to be allowed to say that my character and connections are not unknown to you."

" Ay surely, surely," cried Mrs. Macdoual, with a tone of alacrity ; " yes, my dear young lady, I will do that—we will do that, my dear.—But, poor thing, you have come a long way in grief and trouble—you shall have a glass of my poor love's wine."

" Excuse me, Madam," said Rosella.

" No I shan't excuse you ; it's all ready at hand."

She then opened a small closet, and took from it a bottle and glasses, which she filled with wine ; and Rosella, at the earnest persuasion of Mrs. Delaval, accepted one of them : but she had scarcely raised it to her lips, before it was snatched from her by the lady of the mansion, and every thing again huddled into the closet with a haste and trepidation

dation that spilt the wine, and broke some glaffes.

Rosella was not long suffered to wonder what this strange pantomime could mean; for the voice of Mr. Macdoul, who was thundering anathemas, and horsewhipping one of his girls, betrayed the secret.

The countenance of poor Mrs. Delaval expressed pain, mortification, and displeasure; and her yet more simple friend stopped her ears very carefully, and begged to be informed when Maggy had done screaming, for to hear the poor thing, and not be able to help her, made her quiver like an aspin-leaf.

Another of the daughters now burst into the room, to say that Janet and Isabel had taken the horses from the post-chaise whilst the driver was asleep, and had rode them to water; and one of the beasts had trod upon his harness, and tumbled down, and Janet's

nose was bleeding ; and the other was trotting into the deep pool, and Isabel called out, but nobody came to stop him.

“ Confound you all !” said the mother, raising her voice to a passionate pitch ; for when the informer had run in, she let fall her hands from her head, to hear the mischief that she knew was coming—“ Confound you all ! this is the way you serve me. You’ll all get your limbs broke, and then who is to set them, and nurse you ?—And there,” continued she, crying, “ your father will murder those two girls, he will !—Oh Lord, that I should live to see this day !”

Mrs. Delaval now endeavoured to relieve her inquietude, by saying she would go and speak to Mr. Macdoul ; and calling the girl to her, she tried, with her assistance, to limp across the room ; but it was with so much difficulty that she could advance in any way, that Rosella, unasked, flew to support her.

“ Thank

“ Thank you, my dear,” said the sufferer, who had not been much accustomed to spontaneous kindness, “ I will not lean too hard.”

“ Yes but ye do,” said the imp on the other side of her, “ I sal drap doon gin ye dunna haud yere hond.”

“ Go then,” replied Mrs. Delaval, with considerable resentment, “ go in your father’s way, and get your deserts ; and then call out to me to make him *haud* his *hond*, as you did yesterday.”

“ Noo I wunna then,” said the girl pouting.

“ You are always keeping your mother in hot water,” resumed the good lady ; “ such a set of idle, good-for-nothing girls was never seen ! you worry her poor heart to breaking amongst you—you do !”

“ Ah, God help me !” exclaimed the mother, in a piteous tone.

“ Mither scailded me yestreen,” cried the daughter, “ for randing my claihs—and noo she’s brak her ain goon !”

“ Hold

"Hold your tongue, you pert slut," retorted the matron, flapping her face.

The young lady immediately set up a roar, that saved Mrs. Delaval any further effort, by bringing the father into the room, with the dreaded whip flourishing in his right hand; but on beholding Rosella supporting his lame inmate with kind solicitude, that hand for once forgot its office, and he gave her several ferocious glances, which Mrs. Delaval could not fail to observe.

"This young gentlewoman," said she, "comes from my poor niece, who has lost her senses, and is going to be put into a mad house, I suppose."

"Aw! and wha's the next a-kin?" demanded the Scotchman.

"Why I am the nearest relation," returned Mrs. Delaval, "and should like to see that justice is done her."

"Justice!" repeated Macdoual, "aw—but wha speirs aboot the praperty?"

“ We will talk of that another time,” said Mrs. Delaval; “ Miss Montresor wants a lodging and board till her guardian sends somebody to take her to England.”

“ Aw— wal, Mefs, and what d’ye luk for at Dumfries?”

“ She looks for nothing but civility,” said Mrs. Macdoual, eagerly.

“ Haud yere toongue,” returned the husband, in a voice of thunder.

An insult offered to her little fat friend generally aroused some indignation in the bosom of Mrs. Delaval, and with a look of commiseration, she begged the silenced gentlewoman to call Mally.

When Mally made her appearance, she gave orders, in a very firm tone, to shew the young lady to Jamie Campbell’s, and tell his wife to give her their best room, and wait upon her, and go to market for her whenever the young lady chose.

Rosella,

Rosella, extremely delighted to escape the torture of living in such a *menage* as that of Macdoual, took a respectful leave of Mrs. Delaval, and accompanied Mally, telling the post-boy to follow her, who had with some trouble rescued his horses from the Miss Macdouals.

Nancy had been walking about to stretch her legs, and now joined her young Lady ; who, thus attended, proceeded to take possession of the best room at Jamie Campbell's. His house, unlike that of his neighbour, promised nothing on the outside, but had "that within which passeth shew:" it was neat, quiet, and well-arranged, and Jamie's wife received her unexpected guest, not without some little bustle, but without disorder.

The best room was much approved of by Rosella, for it was clean, light, and airy, and overlooked a fine tract of country terminated by the Solway Frith. She discharged

the chaise with real satisfaction ; and Nancy having placed in her apartment what Mr. Bristock had condescended to leave of her baggage, she no longer felt a wanderer upon the surface of the globe, but contemplated the little space appropriated to her use, and much applauded herself for thinking of appealing to the protection of Mrs. Delaval.

Nancy was far from being so well pleased : she reprobated every delay that retarded her approach to London, that most charming of emporiums for sweethearts and fine clothes ; and expressed her sorrow that Mr. Oberne, that sweet-tempered gentleman, had not presided over the journey, because then it would have been performed something like the matter.

Mrs. Campbell entered into her office almost immediately, by preparing dinner for her fair inmate ; and as Rosella saw no one in the house but her, she began to hope that Jamie was absent from the place : for the
specimen

specimen of internal government she had witnessed at Macdoual's, had very much disgusted her against matrimonial aristocracy. But she was mistaken; in the evening the husband returned from a manufactory he superintended, and Rosella found no inconvenience from it, as he sat at his door very peaceably, whilst his wife exerted herself to make every thing look comfortable, and rubbed each piece of furniture to a double brightness, in honor of their new guest.

CHAP. III.

*Credulity, as in time immemorial, an easy conquest for
artifice and hypocrisy.*

THE next morning Rosella walked to Macdoual's, to enquire if Mrs. Delaval were in better health, and to say that a letter for herself would most probably be there in a day or two, which she entreated the family would either take in for her, or send to Jamie Campbell's.

Fortunately the master of the house was from home, but, in his absence, he had left a spy upon the proceedings of his wife and her friend, in the person of his eldest daughter,
who

who much resembled him ; and this young lady was to be circumvented before Mrs. Macdoual could venture to indulge her *poor love* with a few minutes' conversation with Rosella—a thing the good lady much wished for, but scarcely dared to propose.

After a feint of sending the visiter away, Miss Janet was easily amused, whilst Rosella was smuggled into the chamber Mr. Macdoual condescended to allow his inmate, in return for the income of her fortune, of which, from her own account, he had almost the sole use.

The reception she received was kind, and almost tender : poor Mrs. Delaval could now speak without the interruption of her officious friend, who was fully employed in keeping her precious daughter Janet at bay.

She desired Rosella to tell her every thing she could think of concerning her sister and her niece, and the good lady wept much at

the death of the first, and the strange fancies of her poor Sophy, who had always, she said, been a good girl, only a little whimsical.

“ And now,” added she, “ I know how to value a sweet-tempered child ; for here—God help us ! the bairns are like young dragons !—and their father——In short, my dear, only don’t let it go any further, if it was not for my good friend Mrs. Macdoual, who has been like a sister to me, I should have returned to England long ago.”

“ Ah Madam !” said Rosella, “ how delighted would Miss Beauclerc have been to have made you happy !—Indeed she was very amiable——”

“ Don’t cry, my dear,” interrupted Mrs. Delaval, though her own tears dropped equally fast ; “ I see you are a good-natured girl, and I am sure you was very obliging to me yesterday.—God knows, I have not been used to kindness much since I left England, except from my poor friend ; and she is almost killed herself by those termagants and
their

their father. I have been thinking all night—only Mr. Macdoual is so stern and passionate, that he will half kill his wife, poor thing, if I go—but I have been thinking, my dear, that I should like to die in England;—and I should like too, to see if any thing could be done to bring poor Sophy to her senses again. I perceive you are grateful for her kindness to you—I love to see young people grateful—and indeed she had a great affection for you; for she never wrote me a letter without saying what a sweet, pretty, good-tempered child you was; and I find that it is all true enough.—Mr. Macdoual is so violent!—but I should like,” repeated she, in an emphatic accent, “to see England and poor Sophy once again!”

From the further conversation of Mrs. Delaval, Rosella discovered that she was actually only detained in the family, by a fear of the consequences her quitting it would produce upon the stormy passions of the tyrant husband, whose youth had been

spent in practising the same servility he now imposed on others. When first Mrs. Delaval took notice of his wife, whom she had a few years before slightly known as a humble companion to a lady she had visited, every effort to gain her countenance and favor, which art and interest could dictate, he employed himself, and infused into the docile and less designing mind of Mrs. Macdoul.

The heart of Miss Delaval, wounded by recent disappointment, turned to the consolatory proofs of attachment and gratitude these people so eagerly pressed upon her; and at length she withdrew from her more gay and indifferent associates, to enjoy the snug fire-side of good Mrs. Macdoul, who was always so proud and so pleased to see her there. This distinguished visiter was, however, sometimes allured from them by a fondness for the delights of the card-table; and Macdoul, when he returned home from the duties of a small place he had in a public office, hearing her sometimes recounting
with

with animation the history of the rubbers she had won, and the pools Fortune had snatched from her in defiance of skill, purchased a green-cloth to cover his Pembroke table upon occasion, and wrangled with a waiter of a tavern for half-a-dozen second or third-hand packs of cards; and then gave his wife her lesson, who had spent many a long evening with her first patroness, an old woman, in winning a few shillings at picquet for pocket-money.

The plan had all the success Macdoual could desire: picquet became the order of the day with Miss Delaval (for she was not yet of an age to assume a matronly title), and she was constantly seen walking towards the lodgings of her favorite, exactly at five o'clock every afternoon, to drink the tea she usually purchased herself, and to have her game at picquet with her good friend.

When the crafty Macdoual thought the empire he had gained by means of his wife,

D 6

thoroughly

thoroughly established, he suddenly avowed a design of returning to his ain coontra, and enjoying the fortune he had realized—in his own imagination; for in fact his only fortune, at that moment, was the harvest he hoped to reap from his designs. If Miss Delaval hesitated to accompany her poor dear friend Mrs. Macdoul, he intended to make himself and her an additional merit in the eyes of his dupe, by sacrificing a plan they both seemed to be fond of, to her inclination to retain them near her. But the good lady did not put them to so much trouble; for she left her sister and her little niece, for whom she had a great affection, and attended the favored family to Dumfries.

But lo! Maister Macdoul had scarcely passed the Solway Frith, when submission and suavity gave way to an affectation of equality, and a passion for dictating; and the poor slave, his wife, was compelled to purchase half an hour of good-humour by
repeated

repeated loans from her friend, who, weak as her understanding was, soon comprehended that if the tyrant threatened to murder the noisy bairns, or refused money for the wife's clothes or the children's food, she might set every thing right again by advancing the sum required; nor did she ever suffer herself to deliberate when poor dear Mrs. Macdoual lamented, wrung her hands, and asserted that she was the most unhappy woman in the world, which she constantly did, in the same manner that a child will practise upon the weak affection by which it can obtain all it wants.

But a mortification awaited Mrs. Delaval she had little foreseen. The master of the house in his ain coontra, was a very rigid disciple of his ain coontra kirk, and would not suffer cards, those devilish vanities, to appear in his premises.—Mrs. Delaval however submitted, bitter as was the pill; for she considered that she was in a strange land, nor would she have ventured to travel so
5 long

long a journey, even to reach London again, without the protection of more than one attendant, for the world.

But she had no attendant now, whose services she could have commanded for twenty miles; for Macdoul had quarrelled with her footman, and she had discharged him at Carlisle. She had likewise parted with her own maid, because poor Mrs. Macdoul cried, and told her that her husband could not abide any but Scotch servants in his house.

Rosella, in the course of a conversation which lasted more than two hours, learned every part of this history that Mrs. Delaval could inform her of, and felt her indignation, as well as her compassion, aroused by the half-uttered complaints of the good old lady, who repeated, when her tale was ended, that if Mr. Macdoul would but hear reason, she would accompany Miss Montrefor to London.

“ You

"You seem so obliging and good-natured," added she, "that I dare say you would be so kind as to take care of me; and then poor Sophy's maid might wait upon me, and I would reward her when I received my half year's interest. But unfortunately I could not undertake the journey at present; for Mr. Macdoual wanted last week to make a purchase a little way out of the town, and I could not refuse to lend him my running cash, and indeed a little sum besides that I had contrived to save, notwithstanding all the drawbacks upon my income;—because the affair was so advantageous to him, and he talked too of settling the estate upon poor dear Mrs. Macdoual, if he could but get the money to buy it."

"How much do you think, Madam," said Rosella eagerly, "would take you, Nancy, and myself to London?"

"Why, my dear child," returned the good lady, "I cannot absolutely say, travelling is so expensive.—I remember when I came here, it cost me—I almost forget—
let

let me see, we travelled in post-chaifes as far as Northampton, and then William paid every thing, and Mr. Macdoual says he cheated me of near ten pounds;—how it was I can't tell, for he gave in his accounts to Mr. Macdoual; and after that I was persuaded to get into a Diligence; but then what with one extra expence, and what with another, it cost me more money than I had any idea of."

"I should hope, Madam," said Rosella, "that if you would condescend to return in a stage, twenty-five pounds would take us all there, and that sum I can command. If you will honor me so far as to make use of it in this way, you will really confer an obligation upon me;—indeed the money is not mine—it is more properly Miss Beauclerc's."

"Ah, my dear," replied Mrs. Delaval, "I am afraid by my journey hither, that double what you mention would still leave us on the road. But Jamie Campbell can very likely tell you that; and you need not
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mention my name, you know, when you ask him. However we will hope the best; for indeed I long to see old England once more. And, my dear child, I have near five pounds by me, which I could not offer you before poor Mrs. Macdoual, because she did not know I had it; for I can't refuse her if she asks me, and last year I left myself without money to pay for my washing, and little odd things, to preserve a little peace; so I resolved, as I don't love to be in debt to poor creatures that want it, to keep a small sum that I would not break in upon but for necessary uses.—I think, my dear," resumed the good lady, after a momentary pause—"what is your Christian name?"

"Rosella, Madam."

"Aye, I recollect Sophy called you Rosella in her letters. You put me in mind of Sophy; she was a pretty girl, but you are still prettier;—I would not tell you so if you was a vain huffy—but I am sure you are not vain."

"I

“ I hope not, Madam,” returned Rosella, “ and as I much wish for the good opinion of my friends, I hope I shall never become any thing they disapprove.”

“ Aye now, that is talking like a sensible young woman.—My dear, I wanted to tell you yesterday, only there was such a turmoil in the house—there always is, I think!—I wanted to tell you, that as you have lost a friend in poor Sophy, without any fault of your own, you shall find another in me. I am not apt to take likings to young folks—indeed Janet, and Isabel, and the rest of them have sickened me of young girls; but whether it was that you put me in mind of Sophy yesterday when you offered me your arm, or how it was I can’t tell, but I have been thinking almost all night that I will be your friend.”

Rosella burst into tears, and kissed the hand Mrs. Delaval held out to her, but could not articulate a syllable. The good lady pressed her in her arms, and repeated—

“ Poor

“ Poor Sophy ! I little thought, when I left her in England, I should ever hear such a sad account !—I am afraid she grieved about the inconstancy of some lover—Ah my dear child, guard your heart from the wiles of men—they are deceitful, ungrateful creatures !”

This hint brought Oberne to the recollection of Rosella, and she feared, if his attendance upon her should reach the knowledge of Mrs. Delaval, she might lose the kind *protectrice* her better fortune had so opportunely afforded her ; and the heightened color in her cheeks proclaimed that the admonition was not premature.

“ Well, well,” resumed the good lady, “ I shall say no more now, for I am sure you are a prudent girl by your coming here to me. And so, my dear, you will consult Jamie Campbell, and let me know what he says ; for I am impatient to hear if, with what you so kindly offer to lend me, and my
own

own little mite put to it, we can get to London in any way. I am quite bent upon going with you ; for I think when the winter comes on, and it's bitterly cold here, if I stay I shall catch a fixed rheumatism in my poor lame leg, and be helpless perhaps all my life afterwards."

" I fear it will be very inconvenient to you to travel just now, Madam," said Rosella, who had not till that moment thought of the circumstance.

" I shall not mind that," replied Mrs. Delaval, hastily, " I shall not mind that. I shall not die happy unless I see poor Sophy once again ; and perhaps, poor thing, she will know me, and be glad to see me.—But, child, I had almost forgot to tell you that you must write what Jamie Campbell says about the costs of the journey, and give the letter with your own hands to Mally, for I can trust her—she is a faithful creature !—I am afraid to say any thing to Mrs. Macdoul ; it is so natural for her to tell her husband all she knows, though she never means
amiss.

amiss.—When I get to England, I shall not want a supply of money ; for there is a person in London whom I formerly served, who will lend me, I am sure, a reasonable sum to go on with till my dividend becomes due, which will be in less than two months ; so I am easy in that respect. And when I get back to London, I shall not forget, as I said before, your kindness to me here in a strange country, where I am not well looked upon, I believe, because I was bred up differently as to religion ; but I will not be brow-beat out of my own way of worship, or go to the kirks here, when in my own mind I like the Church of England best, because that is the worship I have been used to. Mr. Macdoul to be sure may think——”

The lady of the house now ran into the room, saying—

“ Come, my poor love, you have had a long confab ; it is time for Miss Mounteresa to be gone, for my husband will be back shortly

shortly—and there's Janet as prying as an imp; I'm sure she suspects mischief, and then her tongue will be at work to tell her father all—so there will be a fine hubbub by and by amongst us!”

“I will go immediately,” said Rosella, starting up to prevent the catastrophe thus foretold.

“God bless you, my dear!” ejaculated Mrs. Delaval; “I am sorry to let you go without your dinner—it seems so hard to send you away without asking you to dine.”

“Oh if that be all,” interrupted Mrs. Macdoulal, “I can send her some porridge and a neck-of-mutton bone, without its being at all missed.”

“No, I beg you will not,” said Rosella; “the good woman where I lodge will get me something, for she is very obliging.”

“Tell her, my dear,” said Mrs. Delaval, who appeared much hurt, “that I take it very kind of her; but as to our Scotch porridge, I am sure you would not like it—it

was

was a long time before I could get used to it myself."

Rosella secretly hoped that she would not much longer be compelled to receive ill-treatment and meagre fare ; and when, after being hustled out of the house, she returned to her lodgings, she could not prevail with herself to eat her own dinner, from the idea that would obtrude of Mrs. Delaval's unpalatable and embittered meal.

She forgot not to consult with Jamie, as she had been enjoined to do, who told her that he could not at all guess at the expence of such a long journey, but he promised to enquire. When he withdrew, Nancy, who had been present at the conference, said that talking of money put her in mind that she had four guineas belonging to her poor Lady, who had given her five to keep house only the day before they left the cottage, and she had paid away twenty shillings and six-pence for

for things had there, which Menie and Maclean could prove.

Rosella was much pleased to hear this, but desired her to keep the money and her account till they arrived in London, and then she would have it settled. Not daring, however, to trust her with Mrs. Delaval's secret, she did not inform her that she hoped to procure her a good place immediately; and Nancy was not at all anxious upon the subject, as she thought that in London good places would infallibly shower down so fast, that she would have nothing to do but to chuse the most agreeable.

In the afternoon, Rosella condescended to admit her as a companion in her promenade, which would have been a most melancholy one, had not the promised friendship of Mrs. Delaval intervened to calm her inquietudes on her own account; and her proposed journey to England inspired her with a lively hope that Miss Beauclerc, by her interference,

interference, might be rescued from the power of her hateful and selfish cousin.

She followed the course of the river towards the Solway Frith, and was much amused by the busy scene it presented; but the *delassement* of the mind will not always prevent the feet from tiring, and she was at length turning back, when the well-known figure of Oberne appeared at a little distance hastening to meet her. Rosella was immediately seized with a little trepidation that rather retarded her progress, and when they met, he enquired if she had not too much fatigued herself.

Nancy recollecting what she would have expected of another, had she been Miss Montresor, followed the golden rule, and very cleverly dropped behind them to admire a fishing-boat that was passing.

“How does the fair Rosella like the old aunt?” continued Oberne; “but, if I un-

derstand right, you are not in the house with her. Has she disappointed your expectations?"

"On the contrary," returned she, "Mrs. Delaval is much more favorably disposed towards me than I had any reason to hope. But the family she is with——"

"Are devils!" interrupted Oberne.—
"You find I have learned something since I entered Dumfries."

"But this circumstance," resumed Rosella, "is so far in my favor, that I believe it will be one motive to induce the poor lady to accompany me to London."

"If so," said he with abrupt gravity, "my guardianship ends here."

"But not my gratitude," replied Rosella.

Oberne turned away, and hummed part of an air.

"This scene is pleasing," exclaimed he, suddenly interrupting the melody.

"I

"I think it is," replied Rosella rather embarrassed, and the conversation dropped.

"When do you quit Dumfries?" enquired he, after an interval of several minutes.

"I really do not know: my motions will now depend upon the convenience of Mrs. Delaval, unless my guardian sends to me in the interim; and then, perhaps, she will have the goodness to make my prescribed time her's."

"I think I have heard you mention the name of your guardian?"

"Very likely," said Rosella innocently; "it is Ellinger."

"And he generally resides in London?"

"Always."

"In the city perhaps.—I suppose he is some monied man who takes great care of your fortune."

"And very little of my person, I believe you think," returned she; "and if that is the case, his cares are not very extensive, for my fortune is a very slender one."

“ Be thankful,” cried Oberne, “ that you are not cursed with great riches. I am much obliged to *my* destiny likewise, that such a stumbling-block to virtue never lay in my way ?”

Rosella smiled, and another pause ensued.

“ Did you say,” demanded Oberne suddenly, “ that your guardian, Mr. Ellinger, lived in the city ?”

“ He lives in Chancery-lane,” replied she.

“ Horrid place !” exclaimed Oberne ; “ I never hear the name of it but I instantly recollect an atrocious old villain, who received ten guineas for scribbling over an infernal parchment so carelessly that it more than half ruined me ; and when I remonstrated upon his negligence, he afforded me the particular consolation of learning that he had never practised in that particular line, and had merely done it to oblige me !”

“ I

"I never suffered in the same way," said Rosella, smiling, "but I dislike the place, I think, as much as you do."

"Do you then live there?"

"I called it my home," she replied, sighing; "but the friendship with which Miss Beauclerc has distinguished me from childhood, withdrew me from a residence I could not love."

The enquiries he had made led her to reflect upon the peculiarities of her situation; and his surprise on finding that Mr. Ellinger's abode was her's, brought to her imagination a circumstance that had never before appeared so singular to her:—she had never heard of one relative, either of the family of her father or her mother; and some vague conjectures floated on her mind, concerning the pretended discovery of Miss Beauclerc's affinity.

"I thought when I met you," said Oberne, breaking the silence, "that we had been

been much farther from the town. How is it that we have already reached it ?”

“ I had the same idea of its distance,” observed Rosella ; “ we were both mistaken.”

“ Lord ! I thought for my part,” exclaimed Nancy, who had now approached them, “ that we should never get here ; but there is nothing like chatting and pleasant company to be sure, to pass the time away.”

Rosella blushed ; and Oberne heard the observation in silence, which Nancy thought very odd, because he was such a pleasant gentleman that had always something merry to say.

When they were near the habitation of Jamie Campbell, Rosella turned to him, and said she must wish him good evening.

“ I wish you ten thousand,” returned he : “ do not however imagine this farewell is to last for a year or two. I shall remain at Dumfries,

Dumfries, I believe, till you leave it, and then we will see which of us, with equal sincerity, can outvie the other in good wishes."

He then suffered her to walk forward without him; and she could not forbear reflecting, for some time afterwards, upon the variations in his countenance and manner, which had taken place during their interview.

CHAP. IV.

Farewel wishes—A rescue from the tyranny of very humble friends.

WHEN she retired to her apartment, Mrs. Campbell entered, to say that Jamie had been at home, and left word for the young lady that Mrs. Frazer, the merchant's weef, had been to London, some years back, for five pounds ; but that every thing was dearer now ; and besides she had a large family of children, and only the shop to live upon, so she went as cheap as a prudent woman could do.

Rosella

Rosella was pleased with this statement, which did not overthrow the plan of Mrs. Delaval, even if her eagerness to leave Dumfries should induce her to begin the journey, before Mr. Ellinger's economic deliberations had arrived at an active conclusion.

It was twilight when Mally stole in to say, the young ledly maun gie her the latter noo, for she munna sta, or her maister wad raise the deil in the hoose; and Rosella having fortunately just written a billet to Mrs. Delaval, gave it to the girl, with a charge to deliver it privately, which Mally already understood she was to do.

Much however as she was hurried, she could not forbear staying to tell Jamie Campbell's wife, that, e'er sin yestreen, poor Maistress Dalaval had led the leese of a dog.

Rosella overheard this intelligence, and wished she could have applied a pair of wings to Mally's feet, that the poor old lady

might the sooner learn the information she carried.

She would not venture the next morning to approach Macdoual's house, but waited at home in the hope that Mrs. Delaval would find an opportunity of sending to her; nor was she mistaken—Mally came with a note, but could not wait for an answer, not even a verbal one.

The billet informed Rosella that after receiving her's, she had plucked up courage, and mentioned her intention to Mr. Macdoual; but whether he imagined she was not in earnest, or that he thought this sudden resolution was a mere whim that would never be put in practice, she could not tell, but he had taken no notice of what she said any further than by being in a worse humour than usual; and that she was so anxious to be gone before the storm broke, that she would try to be ready on the following day,

though she feared there would be some difficulty in getting out of the house.

Rosella thought so too ; but she was rather encouraged in the afternoon, to learn by Mally, who returned to know if she could leave Dumfries by the time mentioned, that Mr. Macdoual had gone a journey, and his wife could not tell where, only she thought it must be to Galloway ; and there had been a great brawl amoong 'em aw, and she had heard her maistress cry and bewail herself, because her maister had not left any filler to buy victuals, and poor Mrs. Dalaval had nae ony to gie her.

Rosella easily discerned the meaning of this : Macdoual wished to try if his inmate had any secret hoard by her, which he imagined the distress of the moment would make her betray—a circumstance he would not long be ignorant of, notwithstanding his pretended absence ; and that if he were assured she was actually destitute of money,

he would stay out of the way to avoid any application, until the fancy of returning to England died away. Rosella wrote therefore, a hasty note to Mrs. Delaval, entreating her to persevere in her assertion that she had no cash by her, and to keep secret the time of her quitting Dumfries.

She had scarcely dispatched Mally back with it, when a stranger enquired of Nancy at the door for Miss Montrefor; she ran in to Rosella, and replied to her questions, that he was an elderly man, very plain in his dress, and that he did not look very good-humoured.

“Who can this be?” thought Rosella; and the scene at Dunkeld rushing into her memory, she dreaded the malice of Macdoual, and trembled lest this person should be an emissary of vengeance. She imagined however that she must see him, and desired Nancy to introduce him into a little parlour she occupied.

As

As he entered, she beheld a man in the decline of life, as Nancy had described him, of a very sedate aspect, who presented her a letter from Mr. Mordaunt, and said he had been commissioned by him to conduct her and her attendant to London. The heart of Rosella beat with delight on hearing this propitious sentence, and she hastily tore open her letter, which she found to be kind and even paternal. He promised to explain when they met why he had not replied to her application, which had not nevertheless been neglected; he lamented the many unpleasant circumstances that had befallen her, mentioned that Mr. Ellinger had communicated her last letter to him, and desired her to return immediately to England, when he hoped to arrange matters upon a better plan in future, and he would exert himself to obliterate the mischievous effects of the past.

Rosella was so charmed with this proof of the good man's regard, that even his messenger,

senger, Mr. Williams, appeared to her a superior sort of beneficent being ;—she entreated that he would sit, and take some refreshment ; but the latter part of the request he declined, saying he had ordered a dinner at an inn.

She then mentioned, that if he should not be too much fatigued on the following day or the day after, to resume his journey, she should wish to comply with Mr. Mordaunt's injunction of an immediate return ; and that having received a proposal from Mrs. Delaval of travelling with her, she hoped she might be so far indulged as to accept it.

Mr. Williams, who was described in the letter Rosella had just read, to be the father of a family, and a confidential agent of the writer, after a moment of consideration, said that he supposed Mr. Mordaunt could not but highly approve of such a circumstance, which he thought had the appearance of being a very desirable thing.

“ I

“ I was surpris'd, Madam,” added he, “ at not finding you with the lady at Mr. Macdoual's, whither indeed I have not yet been ; for I happened, by accident, to enquire of a girl coming out of this house, the way I ought to take, which I could not perfectly understand from the people of the inn, and I accidentally discovered that you lodged here, which saved me an useless peregrination.”

Rosella, in reply, made him acquainted with the situation of Mrs. Delaval, and the many distressing causes that forced her to return to England ; and Mr. Williams listened with evident indignation and astonishment at the villanous machinations of one party, and the helpless imbecility of the other. He thought it advisable to take the poor lady immediately out of the hands of the Macdouals, and promised Rosella to accompany her the next morning to their house, to endeavor to effect this. But he much doubted, from the account of her disaster, which

which Rosella had not omitted, whether she would be able to travel at any rate ; and he proposed, when he had dined, to look out for a more eligible and spacious lodging where Mrs. Delaval and herself might continue to reside, if his surmises were just.

Mr. Williams then withdrew, leaving Rosella much more tranquil than she had found herself for some time past.

She would not in the evening repeat her walk, lest she should appear to seek Oberne ; but she felt this self-denial more forcibly than she would confess to herself, and was not in very good spirits, when Nancy suddenly introduced him without any previous ceremony, as she imagined such a kind friend should not be treated like any body one did not care for.

“ I hear,” said he gravely, “ that your escort is arrived ; perhaps you can now tell me when you leave Dumfries.”

Rosella

Rosella repeated the conversation she had had with Mr. Williams concerning the poor lady at Macdoual's, and added that her departure still depended upon her.

"My enquiry," resumed Oberne, "was merely from idle curiosity, I believe; for as I now consider you to be safe in harbour, I am come only with the intention of bidding you adieu.—I must hasten to London."

Rosella felt the color fade on her cheeks.

"Are you going immediately?" asked she, hardly knowing what she said.

"I shall set off the moment I leave you," replied Oberne; then assuming a gayer air, "and yet," he added, "my business, when I arrive in London, will not be of a kind to reward such expedition; for, to say the truth, I have by some means, I cannot exactly say how, played the devil, and left myself the pleasant alternative of starving in England, or accepting a commission in a regiment."

giment ordered to the West Indies, which my generous and disinterested brother very obligingly offers to procure me."

"You are not going to the West Indies?" said Rosella, with an aspect of concern.

"You would not wish to see me sweeping the streets!" returned he, making an unsuccessful effort to appear lively.

"You shock me!" exclaimed Rosella, shuddering involuntarily.

"I will endeavor to shock you no longer," replied he, taking her hand: "receive then my parting wishes for your future undisturbed peace of mind, your happiness, and prosperity.—Do not wholly exclude the giddy, the imprudent Oberne from your recollection; and wherever his destiny or his follies shall have banished him, he will not be entirely miserable."

At the conclusion of this speech he kissed the hand he held, and suddenly left her; whilst Rosella remained in such confusion, such surprise, such regret at his departure, that

that she attempted no reply whilst he was still in sight, and when she could no longer discern him, she exclaimed with Orlando—
“ Can I not speak to him—can I not say I thank you !”

All that was amiable in the character of Oberne rose to her remembrance—all that she had originally disapproved in it, had, for some time past, faded from her memory; and she wept that a disposition so unaffectedly generous, a nature so open, so frank, so undisguised, should be accompanied by such a careless and incorrigible negligence to the attention every man should render to his circumstances, if he would preserve amidst his fellow-beings of the same gradation of rank, an independence of opinion, of conduct, and of situation.

It was late before she retired to rest; and ere her eye-lids closed in sleep, a violent storm of wind, of rain, of lightning, and
tremendous

tremendous thunder, made her tremble for the unhappy traveller, whom she represented to herself on his passage across the Solway Frith, exposed to the heightened fury of the tempest.

The most unpleasant images troubled her repose after the subsiding of this jar of elements ; and she had scarcely breakfasted the next morning, when Mr. Williams appeared to attend her to Macdoual's.

He had brought with him a post-chaise, to convey Mrs. Delaval from the scene of purgatorial discord and civil war, in which she had existed so many years ; and Rosella feeling but half assured from his protection, and more than half fearful of the brutality of Macdoual should he be returned, the hyena lamentations of his wife, and the clamor of their hopeful progeny, stepped into it, to be the sooner conveyed to the scene of contention, and as she hoped, the sooner conveyed from it.

Mr.

Mr. Williams rung at the bell several times unattended to; and at length, tired of an application so fruitless, he entered a passage, and opening a sitting-room, beheld Mrs. Delaval, such from the description of Rosella he concluded her to be, weeping very tenderly over her friend, whom she repeatedly promised to remember in her will, and to remit to her what sums she could spare from her yearly expenditure.

“ I have taken the liberty of interrupting you, Madam,” said Mr. Williams, “ to inform you that Miss Montresor is at the door. She is in a carriage, which perhaps you would wish to make use of in your removal; but she desires me to say she will await your leisure, if you are not quite ready to accompany her.”

“ Yes,” cried Mrs. Delaval eagerly, “ I am quite ready!”

“ Oh, for God’s sake, don’t go!” exclaimed Mrs. Macdoul; “ I shall die with grief

grief if I lose you ; and besides my husband will kill me for letting you go !”

This double menace of dying with grief, and being killed into the bargain, appeared very much to distress poor Mrs. Delaval, who endeavored however to console her, by saying she would write very often, and still repeating that she would not forget her promises.

“ And what signifies writing,” retorted the afflicted lady, “ when I shan’t have money to pay for your letters.—Oh dear, dear ! Mr. Macdoual will be worse than ever ; and I and my poor children won’t have rags to cover us, nor victuals to put into our mouths !”

Mrs. Delaval could not hear this doleful prophecy without weeping anew ; and Mr. Williams, fearing that her resolution would yield to a momentary compassion, thought proper to interpose.

“ I un-

"I understood, Madam," said he, addressing Mrs. Macdoul, "that this lady wished to return to her native air for the benefit of her health, which Miss Montresor thought had been injured."

"No!" replied she, in all the fury of impotent passion, to which a weak mind will yield itself, "No! it is because that Miss has wheedled herself into favor, and can't bear that I and my children should be bettered as well as herself!—I wish I had known her fawning tricks, and she should as soon have flown up to the moon, as have come into this house, mincing and carying!—But I shall let her know that I have had Mrs. Delaval for my friend these twenty years and more; and every body must say I have a better right to keep her here in my family, than that girl has to take her away!"

"It appears to me, Madam," said the gentleman gravely, "that you are arguing and planning without consulting the inclinations or convenience of your friend; and
indeed

indeed you are not paying a grateful compliment to the understanding of Mrs. Delaval, by supposing that, if her own affairs did not lead her to undertake the journey to England, the persuasion of a young lady, almost a stranger to her, would have sufficient weight to carry her thither."

"Then, if she is a stranger," returned Mrs. Macdoual, in a crying voice, "why does my poor dear want to go with her, away from us all?—She used to hate strangers so much, that we none of us thought of her playing us this trick.—And then, what affairs can she have in England?—Don't my husband manage all her affairs!—I'm sure she has never any trouble with her money.—But pray, Sir, who may you be?"

"I am a plain man, Madam," replied Mr. Williams calmly, "which you may easily discern; and I endeavor to be an honest man. The guardian of Miss Montrefor, and another person interested in her welfare, have employed me to conduct her to them.—This, Madam, and what the
message

message I brought from the young lady implies, is all, I presume, that you wish to be acquainted with."

"The message from her truly! Yes, a fine message from her;—and you, Sir, may take one from me—so pray tell her she is a wheedling, good-for-nothing, young viper!"

"My dear, my dear!" exclaimed Mrs. Delaval, "I must say this is not pretty!—I must say——"

"What," interrupted the poor woman, wiping the dew from her forehead, "is she to come to take the bread out of my mouth, and an't I to speak?"

Several screams, that appeared to proceed from the spot where Rosella was waiting, now attracted the immediate attention of Mrs. Delaval, who was too well enabled to guess what the outcry meant.

"Oh my God!" cried she, turning pale, "those young furies are murdering the poor child!"

Mr. Williams hastily left the room to protect her, and found that the Miss Macdouals had surrounded the chaise, armed with stones and bricks, which they had been indefatigable in collecting from the moment it arrived; and having at length procured a sufficient quantity of ammunition, they had begun the attack by a general discharge of artillery, in which the post-boy had received a contusion on the head, and one of the windows of the chaise was shivered to pieces.

Fortunately Rosella had found her attention excited by the employment the young ladies had so eagerly followed from her first appearance, and thinking it a very suspicious one, had hastily put up the blinds, before she had suffered any further injury than an inconsiderable bruise on the arm.

The driver, enraged at the assault, had repelled it by force, and employed the thick end of his whip to revenge the damage he had sustained; but the Miss Macdouals had
been

been too well accustomed to their father's discipline to shrink at this, and the man would probably have received further injury, had not Mr. Williams immediately seconded him.

Mrs. Macdoual herself likewise ran out, whose inflamed passions requiring a vent, she flew at her daughters, buffeted their faces, and tore off their hair with a violence of action that shocked every beholder, accompanying the unmatronly correction with invectives, which though they were deserved, were not the less ungrateful to the ear.

In the interim Mrs. Delaval crept to the door with the assistance of Mally, who was ever ready to attend her; and invigorated for the moment, by her terrors for Rosella, the poor lady had even approached the chaise to discover if she yet existed. Mr. Williams saw that this opportunity was not to be lost.

“ You are not safe, Madam,” said he, “ with such people as these ! Let me put you into the chaise.”

“ Is the young lady there ?” asked she, with a trembling voice ; “ have they not maimed her ?”

“ I hope not ;—but it is impossible to say what their renewed violence may not effect.”

“ Let us be gone,” whispered Mrs. Delaval, with increasing tremor, “ let us be gone !—My clothes may be sent for.—I had rather lose every thing than suffer any mischief to happen to that good young creature !”

Mr. Williams called to the driver, who instantly obeyed the motions ; they raised the lady between them into the chaise, Mr. Williams followed, and they were almost out of sight before Mrs. Macdoual was sensible of the evasion of her *poor dear*.

When Mrs. Delaval no longer beheld the spot where she had lingered so many years
of

of tasteless existence, she seemed to breathe a purer air ; her spirits, lightened of an insupportable load, gave fresh animation to her countenance ; and Rosella, the latent cause of her emancipation, rose in her esteem and affection in proportion as she felt a return of peace and ease to a bosom from whence they had long been banished.

Mr. Williams was, besides what he had described himself to be in answer to the enquiry of Mrs. Macdoual, a man of quick apprehension and discernment : he knew of the history of Rosella, as much as related to the unfortunate consequences of the eccentricity of Miss Beauclerc, and presaged many advantages from the acquisition of so respectable a *chaperone*, with whom her return to London would be divested of almost every unpleasant circumstance which might otherwise have attended it. He placed Mrs. Delaval and her young companion in the lodgings he had provided, and sent for Nancy to attend them, whilst he went to Jamie

Campbell's to forward the baggage of Rosella to her new abode, and discharge the debt she had incurred by her residence there ; from thence he proceeded to Macdoual's, to demand the trunks and packages of their late inmate, for which purpose he hired a horse and cart to follow him.

Rosella meantime, exerted herself to settle Mrs. Delaval in her apartment ; and as she observed that the smallest motion of her leg was attended with a pain the poor lady could not suppress some indications of feeling, she begged to know what was usually done to relieve it.

The sufferer declined however, having any thing done till Nancy came ; but Rosella would not admit of the delay, and still urging her enquiry, she at length discovered that Mrs. Macdoual had been both nurse and surgeon, and that her attendance and remedies had been slight indeed. Shocked at such cruel neglect, she instantly sent for the
best

best medical assistance the place afforded, not without opposition on the part of Mrs. Delaval, who bade her to reflect upon the expence of surgeons, and that if their stock of cash should be lessened, how should they get to England; for she was certain, she said, Macdoul would be so enraged, that he would not let her have any part of the money she had lent him.

Rosella took this opportunity of presenting her the sum she had accepted of Mr. Craufurd, which was yet entire, telling her in what manner it had become her's, and informing her that Mr. Williams would defray her own expences and those of Nancy. Mrs. Delaval was much relieved by this consolatory intelligence, and her only concern now was, the apprehension of not being able to travel immediately.

“ I never felt my poor leg so bad before !”
exclaimed she ; “ if you should be obliged

to go without me, what would become of me !”

“ Depend upon it,” said Rosella warmly, “ I would not leave Dumfries unless you are in a situation to go likewise !—No, dear Madam, after what I have witnessed, I should think myself wanting in gratitude to Miss Beauclerc if I did not attend upon you to England ”

“ I thank you a thousand times, my dear child,” replied Mrs. Delaval ; “ you are so tender and so kind, that I should be very sorry to part with you, even if I did not fear that Mr. Macdoual would try to get me back.—I thought your guardian would not suffer you to stay perhaps.”

Rosella endeavored to re-assure her on this point, and at length succeeded in calming her inquietude before the arrival of the surgeon she had sent for. He ordered immediate and repeated fomentations to the injured part, recommended a nourishing diet, and forbade all motion that could irritate it.

Thus

Thus was the journey positively postponed for some time, to the extreme mortification of Mrs. Delaval, who ardently desired to quit Dumfries.

It was almost three hours before Mr. Williams returned with her effects ; but he had brought them all, for the invalid had a friend in Mally, to whom at parting, she had been liberal in spite of apprehended poverty ; and the girl would not suffer any thing to be detained by her mistress, whom she very little feared or considered in the absence of Macdoul.

Mr. Williams said he had had great difficulty in accomplishing his errand ; but he declined at present entering into unpleasant details. He had heard enough however, to induce him to take up his abode in the same house with the injured lady ; as Macdoul had been sent to, and his return home expected every hour.

Rosella having communicated to him the injunctions of the surgeon, he wrote the same evening to Mr. Mordaunt, stating the circumstances that detained Miss Montresor and himself, and desiring instructions for his future proceedings.

He was not mistaken in supposing that Macdoual would endeavor to see Mrs. Delaval; but as she had begged that he might not have access to her, Mr. Williams took precautions to prevent him from succeeding; and when he found that the efforts of his wife, who was more fortunate, failed in the great point of drawing the poor lady back to his dwelling, he at length left her to a late repose, with a self-congratulation that he had lost no time whilst it was his good fortune to retain her in his power.

By the cares of Rosella and Nancy, and the attendance of the surgeon, every dangerous symptom was soon removed, which neglect and agitation of mind had produced

in the invalid. Her general health amended visibly, and, in spite of the recollection of poor Sophy, she was sometimes cheerful.

“ I seem, my dear,” she often said to her young companion, “ to be in heaven—I feel so calm and so easy !—I don’t know what I can do to requite you for your goodness to me.—However, I will not forget poor Mrs. Macdoual ; for though she is a little hasty and passionate, she is much to be pitied, and was always more civil to me than the rest of the family.”

Rosella could not forbear thinking that this kind intention was but little merited ; but she was far from presuming to oppose it, and generally received the intimation in silence.

CHAP. V.

A physician's fiat—reformation in the household of a lady of sentiment.

IN a few days an answer arrived from Mr. Mordaunt, who excessively approved what had been done with regard to Mrs. Delaval. He hinted at the extreme importance the continuance of her friendship would be of to Rosella, and as Mr. Williams had mentioned that she was destitute of money, from the encroachments the Macdouals had made upon her income, he desired Rosella would inform her that she must consider Mr. Williams as her banker; who had received instructions, by the same post, to supply the
good

good lady with cash for her immediate use, and for the expences of her journey ; and he was likewise directed to remain at Dumfries until she could be removed.

In Mr. Mordaunt's letter to Rosella, he further desired her to inform the aunt of Miss Beauclerc, that her guardian consented to her residence with her as long as it should be agreeable to either party. And Rosella was now so much attached to the invalid, by the mildness of her temper, the simplicity of her manners, and the goodness of her heart, that she was herself delighted with the permission, and hastened to impart it to her.

Mrs. Delaval wept from satisfaction ; she no longer feared the diminution of her little stock of money. Nancy was installed into her service in due form, and in less than a fortnight she was enabled to move southward by easy stages. But when she found herself once more on English ground, she forgot all her ailments ; and a letter meeting her at
Carlisle

Carlisle from Mr. Mordaunt, to hasten her journey, by the intelligence it communicated that he much doubted the insanity of her niece from the result of some information he had been solicitous to obtain, and that her presence might be extremely useful, she would no longer be restrained by self-consideration from advancing with a rapidity highly imprudent: yet the representations of Mr. Williams, and the entreaty of Rosella, could not engage her to moderate it.

“What was her worthless life,” she said, “in comparison with the hope of alleviating the confinement of poor Sophy, or freeing her from the power of a mercenary villain, if there were no just grounds for it.”

By the time they reached London, the injury her leg had originally sustained, wore the same appearance, and was still more painful than it had been at Dumfries.—Rosella was much alarmed and afflicted, and only the presence of Mr. Mordaunt, who welcomed

welcomed them to England, when they arrived at the apartments he had engaged for the immediate use of Mrs. Delaval, could for a moment divert her thoughts from the melancholy prefaces that perpetually occupied them.

The good old man embraced Rosella with paternal affection, and congratulated her that she had replaced by her merit, the friend of which misfortune had robbed her.

“ I cannot part with her,” interrupted Mrs. Delaval; “ you must not take her from me. I believe she has saved my life—and of this I am very sure, that she contributes much to my happiness !”

Mr. Mordaunt was pleased at this intimation of the favor with which Rosella was viewed by her ancient friend.

“ This

“ This good girl,” said he, “ will I am sure, accept with great satisfaction the kind protection you offer her.”

Rosella had no difficulty in declaring that she received it with gratitude and delight : but the regret this arrangement renewed for the misfortune of her first friend, forced the tears into her eyes, which she was careful, however, to conceal from Mrs. Delaval.

“ This affair then,” resumed Mr. Mor-daunt, “ being so satisfactorily adjusted, I must now claim a promise of Rosella, that she will steal an hour to-morrow to visit my sister, and acknowledge that I have performed a commission with which she entrusted me, to request that our young friend would favor her with her company for a few months, unless any other engagement prevented her compliance.”

Rosella,

Rosella, who imagined this pretended request was merely the result of his own delicacy and good-will, thanked him with much energy, and promised to attend to his hint.

“ I shall send Philip for you,” said Mr. Mordaunt ; “ for you must accustom yourself to recollect that you are not in a country village, and that in this noisy place you must not indulge in contemplative rambles without an Esquire in your suite.”

He then informed Mrs. Delaval that he had begun a proceeding against Mr. Bristock, in which he had taken the liberty of employing her name, and he hoped it would be successful.

“ If,” he added, “ your niece is really sane, which I have some reason to suppose, I trust that her past danger will henceforth teach her to pay a little more deference to the established usages of society than I hear she has lately done.”

Rosella

Rosella colored at the conclusion of this speech, and felt as though it had glanced at her; but Mr. Mordaunt bade her adieu with the same friendly aspect with which he had accosted her, and a sudden apprehension she had conceived, that her last interviews with Oberne had reached his ears, subsided.

The following morning, at the request of Mrs. Delaval, she wrote two or three notes in her name: one of them was addressed to a person who had formerly conducted her affairs, and the others to some female friends, with whom she had associated on intimate terms before Mrs. Macdoual had so wholly engrossed her favor.

A porter was dispatched with them to their several destinations; but, alas! it was found that only the man of business remained in the same situation in which Mrs. Delaval had left him twenty years back; and the reason perhaps was, that not being then
a young

a young man, he had already made his bed in the same corner for almost the same number of years. The ladies were either dead, or had quitted London to Tabitha at Bath, or had dropped into dowager's quarters, where dowager's incomes would support them.

Mrs. Delaval raised her hands and eyes, exclaiming with a look of consternation—

“ Little did I think when I left London, that at my return I should find things so changed !—But if I can but see poor Sophy once more in her senses, and you, my dear Rosella, are not tired of staying with me, I shall be happy still.”

Rosella assured her, and with sincerity, of her attachment : and it was not by words only that she chose to demonstrate it ; for since their departure from Dumfries she had been indefatigable herself, and as constantly directed the cares of Nancy, to fulfil the prescriptions

prescriptions of the medical person there ; and perhaps without her unceasing attentions, poor Mrs. Delaval had never reached London. Yet spite of her efforts, spite of a night of repose undisturbed, the countenance of the invalid exhibited when she rose, those signs of half-concealed pain the affection of Rosella had taught her to discern, and she had given an additional commission to the porter, to call at the house of Dr. D——, who had attended the family of Mr. Beauclerc, and whose address she well remembered, with a request to visit Mrs. Delaval immediately.

It happened fortunately that Dr. D—— recollected the name of the lady he was thus unexpectedly called upon to attend ; and he obeyed the summons before Rosella was compelled to leave the house. She was present at the interview, and was much pleased to observe that the face of Mrs. Delaval brightened on finding herself addressed by an old acquaintance ; but her satisfaction was completely

pletely damped when the Doctor, whom she attended into an anti-chamber, replied to her enquiries that he feared no effort of skill or attention could do more than sooth the last moments of the poor lady he had just quitted, whose constitution was too much weakened to surmount the mischief she had sustained ; and he thought it but too probable that the extreme poverty of her blood might produce a mortification. He added that he would take the necessary steps that the invalid should immediately have proper attendance, and he would repeat his call the next morning.

He then withdrew, leaving Rosella thunderstruck at the suddenness of this cruel intelligence, which though she had almost foreseen, was not the less shocking to her. She repented that she had promised to visit Mrs. Methwald, and when Philip was announced to be in waiting, she meditated to send an excuse ; but recollecting that Mr. Mordaunt ought immediately to be informed of the
opinion

opinion of Dr. D——, and half-fearing to trust so important a communication to a note, which an accident might prevent him from receiving or reading perhaps for half a day, she determined at length to go.

She ran to the chamber of Mrs. Delaval to bid her adieu, and to charge Nancy to be very attentive to her Lady in her absence; a caution not wholly unnecessary, as the girl's senses had, from the first moment of her approaching London, rushed to her eyes and ears, and it was with much persuasion only she could be dragged from a window to take her meals.

It was now the middle of a warm autumn, and Rosella traversed the half-deserted streets with a sensation of melancholy the local dreariness of the scene increased; and Philip had knocked at the door of his master's house before she recovered from a mournful reverie, in which Miss Beauclerc, Oberne, and Mrs. Delaval had almost an equal share.

She

She observed a carriage in waiting, and was vexed at a circumstance which indicated that Mrs. Methwald was not alone; for she had hoped, as the season was so far advanced, that she was in no danger of meeting any person of such pretensions to distinction, as the extreme fashion and gaiety of the equipage seemed to announce.

Mr. Mordaunt issued from his study on the ground floor, to accompany Rosella up stairs, when Philip informed him of her arrival; but the distress of her countenance so much struck him, that he waved his intention whilst he enquired the reason of her uncommon depression.

Rosella, who had with difficulty repressed her tears in the street, now found herself unequal to the effort; and Mr. Mordaunt, with much tenderness of manner, took her into the room he had just quitted, where he learned the extreme danger in which Mrs. Delaval

Delaval was pronounced to be, and appeared much startled by the intelligence.

“ Is it so indeed !” exclaimed he ; “ Dr. D—— is not in general a croaker.—I must—well, my dear—compose yourself—there, walk up stairs, my sister is quite alone, I believe.—I must go immediately.—Here, Philip, send to Mr. Williams—no, stay I will call myself in my way there—aye—My dear, don’t hurry back—that is without going to Chancery-lane ;—it would be proper to see Ellinger directly, and tell him how I have settled matters for your residence with Mrs. Delaval—he will understand.—There—good morning—God bless you !”

This incoherent speech excited the alarm of Rosella, who had always observed a collected calmness in her old friend entirely remarkable ; but as he had disappeared at the close of it, she had no alternative but to follow his intimation, and walk up stairs to
the

the apartment where Mrs. Methwald constantly gave audience.

She forgot to ring for a servant to announce her ; for though Mr. Mordaunt had spoken to Philip, there was no Philip near to receive his commands ; she forgot likewise the tears on her cheeks, and opening the drawing-room door, found herself suddenly not only in the presence of Mrs. Methwald, but subject to the astonished gaze of her peerless daughter, and the more indignant glance of a very lovely woman, to whom the other ladies, she observed, were earnestly listening, when her entrance disconcerted the party.

A silence of some moments rendered the situation of Rosella still more embarrassing. Mrs. Methwald colored a dingy crimson, and every feature denoted vexation and unconquered confusion, whilst a thousand apophthegms rushed to her assistance, but not one

that could extricate either of the party from their mute agitation.

Rosella, surprised at so uncommon a reception, and imagining that her unannounced appearance might have contributed to it, with some difficulty stammered an apology ; but what could an apology avail, of which not a word could be distinguished ; and what did the philosophy of the perfect Mrs. Cressy avail, since it could not, like a wishing-cap, convey her invisibly from a place where she began to apprehend, that for the first time in her life, she had committed herself ? What likewise could it avail the lovely stranger, that she had gratified by a narrative she had just given in strong tints, a jealous pique her candor condemned, when the tears she now discerned in the eyes of the intruder, her conscience whispered to her she had perhaps wrung from a heart already humbled and distressed ! Rosella was far from guessing that compunction had followed the scornful look she had observed, or that
Mrs.

Mrs. Methwald was meditating how to reconcile contrary interests by being civil to her, whilst she preserved inviolate her respect for Lady Morteyne, whose condescending attentions were so grateful to Mrs. Cressy, and who promised to become the Cynosure of several seasons, from her youth, her beauty, her title, and her recent marriage; for the lovely stranger was in fact, the very thorn Miss Beauclerc so politely informed Lord Morteyne he was binding to his bosom.

Rosella feeling her spirit rise against the rude contempt with which she conceived herself to have been treated, coldly said that she was sorry her visit had been so extremely ill-timed; and shutting the drawing-room door, from which she had not advanced, she walked down stairs, and returning to the study, rung for a servant, whom she begged to procure her a chair.

Then taking up a book, she sat down, not to read, but to reflect with indignation upon

the strange behaviour of Mrs. Methwald and her companions. Had she not been led by Mr. Mordaunt to suppose that his sister would receive her with kindness, she might have concluded that the reports so injuriously spread, had reached her ear, and that she did not discredit them; but he had even more than indirectly desired her to thank Mrs. Methwald for an invitation she had sent by him, to reside with her several months; and she could not reconcile such a mark of favor with the reception she had just experienced.

She had not heard the servant quit the house on the commission she had given him, and fearing she might yet be detained some time, was opening the door to enquire, when a voice in the hall, which she thought she was not unacquainted with, caught her attention: it asked if Lady (she could not distinguish the name) were not there?

“ There

“ There is a lady here, Sir,” replied a lad, who let the enquirer in, “ but I did not hear her name. I believe the lady is in my master’s study.”

So saying he opened the door, and ushered into the apartment where Rosella was— Mr. Lesley.

“ Ha! do I see Miss Montrefor?” exclaimed he.

She wished to avoid a recognition so unpleasant, and enquired of the domestic, who appeared to be a groom, if any body had procured her a chair.

“ John is gone to get one, Ma’am,” replied he, leaving the room abruptly, to attend to a couple of saddle-horses that hung by the bridle to the railing before the window.

“ I had almost forgot, in the unexpected pleasure of meeting you here,” resumed

Mr. Lesley, "that I have not received your pardon for the offence I was blind and undiscerning enough to commit at Guairdy."

Rosella, who was ardently wishing to leave the house, was listening to every sound from the hall, in the hope of hearing the chair announced; and did not at this moment so much attend to Mr. Lesley as to a bell violently rung, which she concluded was from the drawing-room, immediately followed by a female voice on the stairs.

"Good God!" exclaimed Mrs. Methwald, in a tone of agony, "there is not a creature to let your Ladyship out!" And the bell was again applied to, with still greater perseverance.

Rosella felt like a culprit: she had employed John who ought to have been in waiting; and to perfect her agitation, Mr. Lesley, who had been vainly wasting much elocution in enforcing a petition she scarcely heard,

heard, now aimed at rendering it irresistible by dropping on his knee—a movement that sufficiently claimed the attention of Rosella, however it might fail of obtaining her approbation.

“ I know myself to be so unpardonable an offender,” cried he hastily, as if he had feared an interruption, “ that I can hardly expect the indulgence of being heard, unless you——”

The door of the study was now thrown open, and Mrs. Cressy appeared at it, whose crimson-stained lips quivered with horror at so atrocious a sight as that which thus unexpectedly met her round grey eyes. Lesley, whom she had undertaken to instruct in botany, and to whom she had actually read the “ loves of the plants” whenever she could force him to listen to it! Lesley, with whom she had so frequently argued upon French politics and fine lady philosophy! Lesley, to whom she had one star-light night,

poured out her whole knowledge of astronomy, and whom she had distinguished from the whole *parterre* at the Opera, and nodded to from her box with such a fascinating air, and so many muscle-working smiles ! Was it to be endured ?—Yes, Mrs. Cressy endured it, and smiled once more !

“ Lady Morteyne’s servants said you were in the house,” said she, with a simper that looked as if it was the effect of acid in the mouth, “ and I imagined you must be with my uncle ; but I perceive you are in more pleasing society. Your sister may be informed, I suppose, that you are not immediately at leisure to attend her.”

At this instant John returned with the chair, and Rosella was relieved from one of those unpleasant scenes, in which a sensation of guilt is experienced in spite of conscious rectitude, and from the mortification of being the object of those oblique censures of malice,

malice, which must be self-appropriated before they can be repented.

She silently curtsied to Mrs. Cressy ; but recollecting as she was placing herself in the chair, the kindness of Mr. Mordaunt, and his evident wish that she should preserve the good opinion of his sister, she left her compliments to Mrs. Methwald, with an intimation that she would have the honor of repeating her visit, and hoped to find herself engaged.

“ My mother is perfectly alone at present,” said Mrs. Cressy, advancing into the hall with an obliging air.

Rosella replied that her time was at present circumscribed from the extreme indisposition of Mrs. Delaval, and that she was compelled, by an injunction of Mr. Mordaunt, to see Mr. Ellinger before she returned home, which she wished to hasten as much as possible.

The chairmen then trudged away with their burthen: but as they turned out of the house, Rosella heard the *suaviter in modo* pupil enquire of the groom if his master was going to ride; and the lad replied that the horses had been ordered at half after one, and had not yet been countermanded.

This information brought to her recollection the *impromptu* agitation in which Mr. Mordaunt had left her; and comparing it with the composure she had observed when they first met, she trembled lest the welfare of Miss Beauclerc hung upon the life of her aunt.

When she was deposited however, in the well-known passage in Chancery-lane, every gloom gave way to the habitual one with which she entered that house. She discovered from the people in the office that Mr. Ellinger was not at home, and without further enquiry walked up stairs to pay her compliments to the lady of the mansion;

but was much surprised to find in the dining-room a very cross-looking old woman, seated *en maitresse*, with a large flasket of linen by her side, some of which she appeared to be patching very assiduously through her spectacles.

The good dame looked up on hearing the door open, exclaiming, when she beheld Rosella—

“ Well, child, and what are you come for ? ”

“ I wish to see Mrs. Ellinger, Madam. ”

“ And pray, my dear, an't I Mrs. Ellinger ? ”

Rosella was embarrassed ; she had never seen this personage before, but suddenly recollected that her guardian had a mother.

“ It was the younger Mrs. Ellinger I wished to see, Madam, ” replied she.

“ Ho ! so I thought ! what another bill, my life for it ! You are a milliner’s girl I take it, by your fine clothes and jaunty looks.—Well, we shall see an end to them, it is to be hoped, before my son gets into the King’s Bench. However, you need not trouble yourself to bring any bills run up since the second of this month ; I tell you that for a warning ; for the good-for-nothing, extravagant, fine lady trollop went out of these doors, bag and baggage, on that blessed day ! and whilst I can keep out of my grave, she shall never set foot here again !”

“ Good Heaven ! has Mrs. Ellinger left her house ?” exclaimed Rosella, much shocked.

“ Aye, aye, she’s gone, and see what she has left behind her !—Come when you would, you never saw a needle and thread in her hand, and a fine hand she has made on’t.”

So saying, the old dame displayed an enormous bundle of shirts and household linen in a most woeful tattered condition.

“ I

“ I found all these,” cried she, “ rotting in dirt, so I had ’em washed to see what I could make of ’em. She thought truly, nobody would pry into her doings till Madam there, her crazy friend, came home ; but she came home in a strait-waistcoat, which she ought to have had when she ran away with that young fellow nineteen years ago !—I said she’d come to no good then ; and there’s that young slut she took too, she has got herself into fine bread, running after gentlefolk’s husbands, and playing her pranks in Lord’s families.”

“ Is it possible,” exclaimed Rosella, “ that I should thus have been represented !”

The talkative old housewife now raised her spectacles, to gaze at her more attentively.

“ You, child !” cried she, dropping from her withered hand the scissars that hung to her apron-string, “ why surely you an’t—”

“ My

“ My name is Montresor,” interrupted Rosella, who repented that she had been betrayed to express any emotion.

“ Aye, my good child, that’s the name you go by ;—and so you are come back ! Well, well, we must all do the best we can : howsoever don’t think I’m sorry.—I dare to say you can handle your needle ; you look like a notable girl, so we shall agree very well, I’m sure.—But are you come now for good, my dear ? because I was forced to have all the blankets washed, and the beds took’d down.—Oh Lord ! well it don’t signify talking of it—it’s well dirt don’t poison ; and as to the floors, I had ’em all well fluiced, and they’ve been all scrubbed every day since, by my own maid upon her marrow-bones, to make ’em come to their color.—Betty’s a girl that don’t flinch at her work—but we’ve all our troubles.—I don’t think this place agrees with her ; she has got the violentest cold and fore throat, poor wench ! I can’t think what is come to her !”

Rosella

Rosella was far from being at a loss to discover, but she had no inclination to discuss the point.

“ Will you inform me where Mrs. Ellinger lives, Madam ?” asked she.

“ Oh God knows !—But, child, be advised by your elders—it will be no credit to you to herd with her ; and indeed I can’t have any body in this house that chuses to have any thing to say to her, or such persons as she may be with.”

“ Is Miss Ellinger with her mother ?” resumed Rosella.

“ She ! no indeed—Livy is a very clever girl, and has accomplished herself in all sorts of drawing, and painting, and music, and fine works, and broidery, and such like ; and she has got a place to be with the Lady Merriens, to tend upon ’em, and be their governess, I assure you !”

Rosella was much surprised at the whole of this intelligence : of Miss Livia’s accomplishments

plishments she had seen proofs that perfectly satisfied her of what kind they were;—that Mr. Ellinger should suffer his daughter to reside under any roof in a menial capacity, which the old lady's expression of *tending* seemed to indicate, she much wondered at; and that the noble family into which she had introduced herself, should allow any attendant to be companion and instructor, or an instructor to perform the office of an attendant, excited still greater astonishment; nor could she forbear marvelling, when she heard how delightfully the Lady Merriens were accommodated with an attendant and a governess in one and the same person—who the inculcator of morals, and the advocate of the Virtues and the Graces, could be!—no doubt a distinct office from the other two, since Miss Livia was so ill calculated to perform this third part.

“ You cannot inform me then,” said Rosella, dismissing her reflections, “ where can address Mrs. Ellinger?”

“ No,

“ No, child, not I ; but we shall know fast enough, I suppose, when her quarterage is due—she won’t forget to ask for that in the midst of her fine nonsense, about not being beholden to base people who think so much of their money ; she did not think of her husband’s money, as all her bills can testify, an extravagant——”

Rosella, sick of this invective, interrupted it, to desire the good lady would present her respectful remembrance to Mr. Ellinger, and tell him she had called to say she resided for the present with Mrs. Delaval, which she hoped he would not disapprove ; and then, without waiting an answer, she wished the irascible dowager good morning, and hastened out of the room.

As she passed the office-door, Mr. Povey threw it open, exclaiming, with even more than his usual pertness—

“ Ha, little Montresor ! what, you are come to see the old one, for a reinforcement

ment of cash, I suppose!—Upon my soul though, I was concerned to hear that the old maid ran on the wrong side of the post so confoundedly! Why they say you was left on the road, without a guinea in your pocket!”

Rosella, with a look of anger and contempt, pushed by him; but he followed her up the passage, and as the chairmen were not in the way, she was obliged to hear a continuation of his impertinence.

“You see,” cried he, “that I don’t follow the example of my friend Estcourt;—upon my soul he is a fine fellow—what a cursed, hard-hearted Gipsy you must have been, to have dashed him down that rock, and broke his bones in that manner!—You see I don’t cut with old friends, because they are not up to my trim!—Here I am you find!—D—n it if I can think how those poor devils in the office can sit fagging
the

the twelve hours round, like so many pack-horses !”

Rosella, who had not forgotten the time when Captain Povey thought himself happy to be called down from his stool to attend her, could not forbear smiling, with an air not to be mistaken, at the conclusion of this elegant speech ; he felt the silent satire, and determined to revenge it.

“ I have been so hoaxed,” resumed he, “ by a round of engagements to-day, that I almost forgot the scene I witnessed as I was passing Bootle’s. There was your old favorite, Arthur Oberne, arrested this morning in the view of about fifty of us, who were lounging up and down the street. Curse my spurs, if I ever saw a fellow fight more manfully !—but the dogs who entrapped him were up to his tricks—so a grim-looking scoundrel took him a cudgel stroke across the head, that laid the scull open, by God !”

Rosella

Rosella felt as if the place turned round with her; she grew faint, and could scarcely support herself by leaning against the wainscot.

“Hollo! what!” exclaimed the unfeeling Povey, “why I thought—Oh ho! well, don’t droop—he isn’t done up yet!—Why an intimate friend of mine has taken five guineas to give a hundred if Clanallan sees another shooting season; so if his friends will speculate upon his carcase to such odds as that, you know, why any deep-one will bail Arthur on the same score.”

Rosella did not hear a word of this pretended consolation; but, afflicted at the misfortunes of the generous Oberne, and disgusted by the impertinent ease with which the exulting Povey had treated a subject so distressing to her, she left him with contempt, to seek for some one who would enquire whither the chairmen had betaken them-

themselves; but these gentlemen having finished a political debate at the nearest public-house, now thought proper to return, and receive her further commands; and Rosella eagerly seated herself, with just sufficient presence of mind to tell the men where to take her; whilst Povey, doubly gratified by her distress, and the subject that had excited it, saw her depart with the malicious grin of an Arabian savage.

CHAP. VI.

*A heroine's memoirs corroborated by grave testimony—
A death-bed.*

ROSELLA felt like a shipwrecked mariner reaching port, when she found herself once more at the lodgings of Mrs. Delaval. She ran up stairs very eagerly, and was surprised to hear from Nancy, that the old gentleman, who had made so much of her the day before, was with the invalid now, and had been with her more than two hours; and that he had sent for another queer, grave-looking gentleman, and they had been very busy; and Mistress had said nobody was to interrupt her till they rung the bell.

She

She concluded that the girl meant Mr. Mordaunt by the old gentleman who had made so much of her the day before, but could not divine whom the second could be. The confinement of Miss Beauclerc, however, perpetually haunting her imagination, she hoped the business in question was some preliminary to her release; and she determined to wait with as much patience as she could summon to her aid, till the signal for admittance allowed her the liberty of interrupting the congress. But in the interval the image of poor Oberne imprisoned, wounded, and disgraced, every moment obtruded upon her recollection, till at length she lost every idea but that one which the malice of Povey had forced upon her, and she was awakened from her reverie by some one tapping her shoulder.

“Rosella,” said Mr. Mordaunt, who had entered the room unperceived by her, “before you again see Mrs. Delaval, I must discover to you a circumstance which would too
much

much agitate her to communicate.—Is your mind sufficiently disengaged to attend to me?”

Rosella assured him that she felt much interested in what he thus prepared her to hear.

“Your father,” resumed Mr. Mordaunt, “some years back, that is, before you were born, was a young man of fortune who had been consigned to my guardianship; and I acted by him and his property in a manner my conscience has never reproached me with. But he was thoughtless and dissipated; and before he married your mother, which happened only three years after he was of age, he had parted with every guinea, and was encumbered with debts of honor to the amount of thousands. Under these circumstances, and others you will hear in future, he was privately united to a lady you are well acquainted with—you are not a stranger to your mother, Rosella——”

“My

“ My mother ! ” exclaimed she with astonishment ; “ is my mother then alive ? — Ah ! Miss Beauclerc is really then my mother ! — How coldly, how ungenerously did I receive her careffes when she announced it to me ! ”

She then recounted to Mr. Mordaunt, in the bitterness of self-condemnation, her disbelief of the asseverations her mother had used to assure her of it, and that she had neglected to read some papers put into her hands for the purpose of proving the fact.

“ Where are those papers ? ” asked he.

Rosella replied that they were in a box with her trinkets, which Mr. Bristock had taken from her.

“ Taken from you ! ” repeated the man of law ; “ where did he take them from you ? — why did you suffer it ? ”

She informed him of the effect the rough intrusion of Mr. Craufurd and his companion had had.

“ But,” added she, “ I should not have had courage to have prevented Mr. Bristock’s rapacity, had I not fainted ; for I was too much hurt at his intelligence, and frightened by his threats, to have opposed him.”

“ Trinkets, you say ! what may be the value of those trinkets ?—are they worth any money ?”

“ Miss Beauclerc—my poor mother !” returned Rosella, sighing, “ gave them all to me : there was her own picture set in a spring gold case, which cost twenty guineas ; and a pair of bracelets of considerable value I believe, besides other things.”

“ Of the same kind, I suppose ?” said Mr. Mordaunt.

Rosella replied in the affirmative ; and re-collecting the money, mentioned it to him.

“ Well,

“ Well, my dear,” resumed the old gentleman, with a look of exultation, “ I hope your mother will soon be released; but I wish to caution you not to betray the secret I have revealed to you;—it is much better for her credit and your’s, as she has managed, that your affinity should not be known. Mrs. Delaval her aunt, is you know, likewise your’s, and she is earnest to consider you as her niece in every respect, as your mother has already more money than she can spend with prudence. So go now to the old lady, and take care of her; and to-morrow I will call again.—But tell me, my dear child,” added Mr. Mordaunt, “ if this ruffian seized all your little stock of money, how did you get to Dumfries?”

Rosella changed color more than once: the question put her sincerity to the test; for though she might have said, with truth, that she had possessed enough for the purpose, yet she was conscious of the necessity of informing Mr. Mordaunt of the loan of Mr. Craufurd; and if he learned it at all, cer-

tainly the present moment was the best opportunity she could have of introducing it. Yet to acknowledge that the interference of Mr. Oberne had obtained it, was betraying that she had some correspondence with him at least, if he had not actually accompanied her in the journey.

“What is the matter, child?” said Mr. Mordaunt, warmly; “you did not beg, or sell your clothes, I hope?”

“No certainly, Sir; but it so happened, that a gentleman—that Mr. Oberne——”

“A—a-hem!” sounded in Mr. Mordaunt’s throat; and Rosella, completely disconcerted, colored a deeper crimson than before, and felt unable to proceed.

“Well, this gentleman—this Mr. Oberne, who *happened* to be travelling the same road, I suppose; what did he do to accommodate you?”

“He was so kind—that is, he was so obliging—I mean so polite, as to represent to Mr. Craufurd——”

“But

"But pray," interrupted the good old man, "how did he *happen* to know the circumstance?—I never undertake to represent a case without being well acquainted with it; but perhaps an Irishman is not so scrupulous!"

Rosella was now plunged into fresh confusion.

"Well, well," resumed he, "you are arrived in England again, by strange good fortune, and now we must retain you here; and I am not sorry a motive of delicacy respecting your mother, made me hesitate on your first application to me, to claim you, but by the unsuccessful letter Ellinger wrote at my request."

Rosella was yet more pleased that it had so fallen out.

"So tell me," added Mr. Mordaunt, "the effect of this young gentleman's representations?"

“ Mr. Craufurd offered me what money I should have occasion for,” returned Rosella, “ and I ventured to take twenty-five pounds, which I resigned to Mrs. Delaval at Dumfries; for I happened,” she hesitated at this word, for it did not please her, “ to have in my purse enough to take me there.”

“ Well, well, well! you are safely returned by strange good fortune!” repeated he; “ go to the poor old lady—she wishes to see you.”

He then left the room, and the house, much to the relief of Rosella, who had scarcely ever before rejoiced in his departure from her.

She saw, as she approached Mrs. Delaval, that she had been weeping; and when she dropped on her knees to kiss the kind hand extended to her, the good lady sobbed and embraced her, without having the power of bestowing the benediction her attitude seemed to solicit.

Several

Several moments passed in silence ; for the tears of Rosella flowed as fast as those of her newly discovered relation, who at length, with a deep sigh, articulated—

“ Poor Sophy !—Ah my dear child !” continued Mrs. Delaval, “ I little thought, when she wrote so kindly of you, and talked of your amiable disposition, and your pretty person, that it was my own little niece she was praising !—Indeed I must say, I think her father’s will a hard one ;—as things could not be altered, he should not have dealt so by a poor innocent child as you was, who had never offended him !—But he was an odd-tempered man, as I used to tell my poor sister.—Don’t cry, however, my dear Rosella—I love you as much—more, I believe, than I love Sophy ;—and as she does not want my fortune, because her own is much larger, I have done what I ought to do, and what I earnestly wished to do ;—only before Mr. Mordaunt told me all, I was afraid Sophy might have thought ill of

me for preferring any body to her ; but she can't take it amiss of me, you know, for providing for her child, who has been so ill-treated amongst them all, somehow or other !”

“ Do not say so,” returned Rosella, “ I am happy now in your protection ; and if Miss Beauclerc—I mean my dear mother—were at liberty, I should have nothing more to wish.”

“ You are a good girl,” replied the old lady, “ and was sent by Providence to bring me here to die in peace, which I fear I could not have done at Dumfries. However, I have performed my promise to poor Mrs. Macdoual, so I hope her husband will now be more kind to her ;—but as to saving any part of my income to send her, I shall not be able to do that, I fear, before I am called elsewhere.”

Rosella was unwilling to notice the melancholy intimation with which the invalid had concluded ; but eager to relieve her
from

from any anxiety, she enquired if she should apply to Mr. Mordaunt to advance a sum for the purpose she mentioned.

“No, child,” returned Mrs. Delaval; “what I could do, in justice to myself and others, I would do; but I cannot get in debt myself to relieve Macdoual—it is what I never have done, though I have often been thought ill of, I believe, by refusing.”

Rosella secretly commending a firmness she had not expected to have found, from the easiness of temper Mrs. Delaval displayed, and the impositions which had been practised upon her, dropped the subject, and resumed another, which much more interested her.

“Did Mr. Mordaunt,” asked she, “say if he had discovered, the place to which my mother had been taken?”

Mrs. Delaval, with the usual apostrophe of "Poor Sophy !" replied that he had not entered into the particulars of what he was doing to release her ; but he said he hoped they would meet soon.

" Heaven grant we may !" exclaimed Rosella ; " Oh Madam ! I long to entreat her pardon for the cruel coldness with which I received the communication she thought proper to make to me in Scotland."

The arrival of the physical tribe, whose visits had been remitted to this hour, by the business of the morning, at the particular request of their patient, prevented any further conversation on a subject too distressing to be dwelt upon by Mrs. Delaval, without being sensibly felt.

The good lady exercised her rhetoric in vain, in endeavoring to induce Rosella to give up her post, of chief assistant, during the time employed, by the direction of the Physician,

Physician, in embrocation ; for it was a task she would never delegate to another, less assiduous, or less tender perhaps than herself ; but it was found necessary that the invalid should have a nurse to attend her in the night, and sit up alternately with Nancy ; and to this Rosella, however unwilling to be superseded in her office, could not object, as the good lady suffered with the utmost reluctance, any attention from her which interfered with her rest.

But as she discovered that the catastrophe Doctor D—— had so abruptly announced to her, became every hour more to be apprehended, she would not again quit her, even at the request of Mr. Mordaunt to renew her visit to his sister ; for he had learned the unpleasant issue of the first, though he had not been exactly told the accidental circumstance of the narrative Lady Morteyne was at that moment giving, which rendered the *rencontre* so awkward to the whole party.

The good man foresaw the almost instant

decease of Mrs. Delaval ; and as the mother of Rosella, under the predicament in which her imprudence had placed her, was the most improper person to be entrusted with the care of her conduct, he was anxious to secure her the good-will of Mrs. Methwald, to whose peculiarities he was not blind ; that their residence in the same house, which he meditated, might be the less unpleasant to each.

The death of Mrs. Delaval, which no care or attention could avert, was even more sudden than Mr. Mordaunt had expected. The least motion soon fatigued her almost beyond endurance : after the visit of her surgeon from the sixth day of his attendance, she fell into a profound sleep ; and Rosella, having watched by her for some time, at length crept into the next room, of which the door was not shut, and to enjoy the freshness of the air, placed herself by a window which had likewise been directed to be thrown up. She held a book in her hand, more that she might not appear totally unemployed,

employed, than from any inclination to read ; for in fact she sat immersed in thought, with her eyes earnestly fixed upon the pavement of the street into which the apartment looked.

At length a figure, instead of passing on like others who had walked by without attracting her attention, or disturbing her reverie, stood motionless immediately opposite to her, and Rosella instinctively regarding him, recognized Oberne !—She started—and hastily waving her hand, he returned the motion with a stiff bow, and passed on ; for he imagined she had seen and disregarded the salutation he had twice vainly made.

Rosella was hurt by his manner ; she looked after him, and observed that he likewise turned his head—his feet lingered a moment, and then carried him from her sight. She had no time, however, for reflections upon a distance so unusual in the manner of Oberne, for Nancy called loudly
to

to her from the next room, and wholly occupied by terror, she flew to obey the summons, and beheld the countenance of her good old friend dreadfully changed.

The nurse coolly threw a handkerchief over it; and Rosella endeavoring to snatch it away, exclaimed—

“What are you doing—you will stifle her!”

“Let the poor lady rest,” returned the woman in a solemn whisper, “she is going off!”

“Oh good Heaven!” cried Rosella, in an agony, “call, send for somebody—send for Doctor D——!”

“It is all in vain, Miss,” said the nurse, “her time is come!”

Rosella insisted, however, that her demand should be complied with, and the people of the house obeyed her. She dispatched a messenger too, to Mr. Mordaunt; but

but the affirmation of the nurse was just—in less than a quarter of an hour Mrs. Delaval expired, sincerely mourned by her late-found, but affectionate niece, who wished to have remained with the corpse until it was interred; but Mr. Mordaunt would not indulge her in a request, on many accounts improper;—he removed her immediately to his own house, and in the character of executor, made the usual arrangements for the funeral of the deceased, whose days were shortened by the impolitic avarice of the wretch, into whose power she had inconsiderately placed herself;—the Scotch broth of Macdoual's table had saved a few guineas for the time being, and probably deprived him of thousands.

Mrs. Methwald received Rosella, not as a young person distressed by a painful recent occurrence, but as a young lady who had just succeeded to a considerable property, which would infallibly give her the consequence she would fain perhaps have withheld:

held : she treated her with assiduous respect, and overwhelmed her with those cold attentions, which neither excite gratitude, nor convey pleasure. Rosella felt even the operations of her mind restrained in the presence of Mrs. Methwald, and she regretted each day the death of her good old aunt even more poignantly than at the moment it happened.

It was now thought necessary that she should have a female attendant ; and with much entreaty, Nancy was suffered to officiate in the capacity of lady's-maid, notwithstanding Mrs. Cressy had asked, with surprise and disgust, what awkward creature she had met as she passed into her mother's dressing-room.

Rosella soon began to be anxiously impatient for the performance of the promise Mr. Mordaunt daily renewed to her, that she should very shortly embrace her mother at Avelines ; but it was accompanied with

an

an injunction to have patience, which she every hour found a greater difficulty in complying with. He thought proper to state to her the accession of fortune she had made by the testament of Mrs. Delaval; and Rosella learned, with surprise, that nearly twenty thousand pounds had devolved entirely to her. Mrs. Macdoual was a legatee for the sums Mrs. Delaval had at different times lent the husband to purchase lands and tenements, for which she had contrived to retain acknowledgments to the amount of four thousand pounds; the money was appointed to be paid into the hands of trustees, for the sole and separate use of Mrs. Macdoual, and at her death to be equally divided amongst her daughters. And Mr. Mordaunt told Rosella he had thus settled the plan, at once to gratify the wish of the testatrix to serve the woman, and at the same time to mortify Macdoual, who had conducted himself in a manner so scandalous.

At

At length Mr. Mordaunt announced to Rosella the intelligence she so earnestly longed to hear, that Miss Beauclerc, as she was still called, was, by his exertions in her favor, once more quietly settled at Avelines.

“Thank Heaven!—And why, why,” exclaimed Rosella, “may I not immediately fly to her?”

“My dear,” replied the old gentleman, “I wish you to repress your emotions, and listen to me.”

Rosella was endeavoring to obey, when Mrs. Methwald, who was present, and seemed bursting with some *à-propos* apophthegm, interrupted her brother to observe, that it was not a symptom of a proper education when young ladies suffered exclamations or strong expressions to escape their lips; and that girls of fashion, who were most remarkable for quiet manners, invariably adopted the most simple and delicate phrases, and
always

always rejected such as marked any potent wish or volition.

Rosella, who had more than once marked the countenance of Mrs. Methwald impressed with impatience and disgust towards her, which, on reviewing her conduct, she was at a loss to account for, was now enlightened as to the many offences she might have unwarily committed : but her mind was too much engrossed at this moment by a more important subject, to dwell upon this one, longer than the querulous and peevish voice of the good lady compelled her, and she turned to Mr. Mordaunt in silence, to hear what he meant to say.

“ Your mother,” resumed he, “ has acted in a manner which her sobered judgment contemns :—I have been, I confess, uneasy lest, on her return to her home, she might claim you openly as her child ; as such an avowal cannot now be made with propriety.”

Rosella

Rosella appeared shocked.

“ But,” continued he, “ her natural good sense, which is no longer clouded by idle fantasies, and her earnest wish to repair the inconveniences she has occasioned you to suffer, have induced her to make a considerable sacrifice to advance your interest and future welfare. I was unfortunately absent when my counsels might have been of some service to you—I mean, when the concealment of your birth and the marriage of your mother was acceded to, from the avarice of your grandfather, the romantic ideas of his daughter, and the absurdity of that woman, Mrs. Ellinger. However they succeeded, as they imagined, in imposing upon the world; and now to publish a key to their foolish mystery, and unravel it, would make more noise than a prudent and modest young woman would chuse to be the subject of; especially as their succeeding politics were still more lamentably arranged and conducted, and that the will of Mr. Beauclerc excludes

excludes you from any advantage a public discovery might have given you. You now appear a young orphan of a handsome independent fortune; and the accidents which have been a momentary disadvantage to you, will not be thought the result of your own imprudence, but that of your guardian's, who entrusted you to the guidance of a person deprived, for the moment, of the power of acting with propriety."

The motion of Mrs. Methwald's head now discovered that she eagerly desired to plant a wise sentence after this observation; but her brother averted it by proceeding rather more rapidly.

"This is your mother's own remark; but if an investigation of your birth takes place—if your affinity to *her* is made known, who in spite of the utmost precaution, and the greatest activity in explaining the truth, will not escape the stigma which the most lamentable of human evils, an entire derangement of reason,

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reason, affixes to a family—your future establishment in life might be much injured, and the repentance of your mother rendered still more bitter than it is. And therefore, my dear child, she has consented to your residence with Mrs. Methwald, which I am certain the good humour and good sense of each party will render pleasing to the other, until chance and your own merit present you the future partner of your life.”

Rosella turned to Mrs. Methwald at the close of this speech, to thank her for her considerate and kind hospitality; but her words were arrested in their progress by observing the countenance of the lady crimsoned over with agitation, and every nerve in a tremor. She had begun to discover what these signals meant, and became so embarrassed that her intended compliment of acknowledgment faltered on her tongue, and Mrs. Methwald replied to it by a cold bow.

“ May

" May I be allowed to express my wishes," said Rosella, addressing herself to the honest and well-meaning master of the mansion, " to see my poor mother soon ?"

" Yes, my dear child," returned he with a peculiar kindness of accent she well understood, " you shall visit her to-morrow, and I will accompany you."

" Oh how much I am indebted to you !" she exclaimed ; then recollecting that this energy might be a transgression against decorum, she checked herself, and repeated, in a less animated tone, " Indeed, Sir, I am very much obliged to you !"

CHAP. VII.

*A recantation of error—A disaster productive of
a rencontre.*

THE next morning early, Mr. Mordaunt ordered the carriage, which he very seldom used himself, that he might perform his promise in escorting Rosella; and whilst they were at the breakfast-table, old Philip entered to tell his Lady that Mrs. Cressy was extremely sorry she could not let her have her chariot for the morning, as she was engaged to go to the review; but she would send round to her friends to endeavor to procure a carriage;—and Mrs. Cressy hoped her mother would have the goodness to excuse

excuse the omission of writing her answer, as she was occupied in dressing.

Rosella looked distressed; and Mr. Mordaunt, coolly desiring his sister to inform Mrs. Cressy that her application to her friends would not be necessary, immediately ordered a post-chaise.

The lady, who expected to have the pleasure of being distressed to death for a carriage, whilst that of her brother was employed in the service of their young inmate, was disconcerted by the new arrangement he had made, and her conscience whispered a short sentence, which her pride however would not entirely subscribe to.

When the breakfast was ended, Mr. Mordaunt enquired of Rosella if she were ready for the excursion; and she started up with alacrity to attend him.

“ Shall you,” hesitated Mrs. Methwald, “ do you mean—perhaps you stay dinner at Hampton-wick—and if so, I will take mine with Mrs. Creffy when she returns from the review.”

“ Yes, yes,” returned he, “ we will settle it thus at every event.”

He then took the hand of Rosella, who curtsied her farewell compliment to the lady, and she was led to the hack post-chaise he had sent for, which his groom attended: but Mr. Mordaunt was not long in discovering that it was drawn by a most miserable pair of horses, one of them appearing inclined to gib, and the other, which the post-boy rode, was so old, feeble, and stiff that it could scarcely be forced to move at any rate: and letting down one of the front glasses, he desired to know why he had been so ill-used, and was informed by the driver that his master had let out every other horse in his stable, and would not have sent these had there been another pair to be had in London,

London, but that every thing that could go at all, had been hired for the review.

“ We had better not go on,” said Mr. Mordaunt, “ I much doubt if these wretched animals can take us to Hampton-wick.”

Rosella, who would rather have walked the whole way than have deferred the visit, appeared however so unwilling to turn back, that he would not disappoint her hopes, and bade the lad to proceed.

They were a most tedious time upon the road; but at length, to the infinite joy of Rosella, they turned up the lane leading to Avelines, and her heart palpitated with a mixed emotion of pain and pleasure, as every well-known object met her eye. When the chaise reached the house, she looked up to the dressing-room windows, and catching a glimpse of her mother's figure, as she suddenly retreated from one of them, hastily

ran up stairs, and in a few seconds found herself in her arms.

The person of Miss Beauclerc was emaciated, her countenance pale, and it was easy to discover that she had lost her hair. Rosella was shocked to agony.

“Oh my mother—my dear, dear mother!” exclaimed she, “what have you not suffered!—And I, your incredulous and ungrateful child——”

“Say no more, my Rosella,” returned she, sobbing; “if I have been unhappy, this moment enables me to forget it.—Oh that my follies, which have injured my daughter, might be as easily expunged from the remembrance of the unjust world, which will not separate my imprudence and her meritorious conduct!”

“Oh Madam! think no more of the past,” returned Rosella, “but let the future find us happy in the society of each other! I will forego with delight those imaginary advantages

advantages Mr. Mordaunt speaks of, which militate against my first and most cherished duty—for I cannot give up my mother !”

“ You are the generous, the amiable girl I thought you,” cried the tender parent ; “ amidst the many chimeras I have absurdly indulged, that idea alone was not imaginary ! Oh Rosella ! I was awakened with horror to a sense of the follies I had committed !—Let me not recal the moment in which I found myself forcibly detained from my unprotected girl ; let me not reflect upon the remorse that tore my soul, when the purse I would have sent her was snatched from me, and I was goaded each moment with a horrible review of the insults to which my misconduct had subjected her !”

“ No, no,” interrupted Rosella, eagerly, “ it must all be buried in oblivion !”

“ Let me recollect myself,” said Miss Beauclerc, with an air of dread, “ I must no longer suffer my emotions to govern me—I must watch over every start of what is falsely called sensibility, and be thankful

that the flights of imagination I have indulged, have not wholly undone me !”

Rosella, as if fearful of disturbing the empire her mother fought to gain over herself, kissed her hand in silence.

“ My dear child,” resumed she more calmly, “ our worthy friend, Mr. Mordaunt, has informed me by whose interference you was rescued from your regretted situation at Dunkeld.—Do not be apprehensive that I am relapsing,” she added, with a sedate smile ; “ I am no longer in the clouds, and though I still think highly of my Rosella’s attractions, I do not suppose that every unmarried man she may meet, must of necessity have retained a disengaged heart for her. But I acknowledge that I think the conduct of Mr. Oberne unusually assiduous ;—do not however let me mislead you by romantic suppositions perhaps,” continued she, on observing a sudden change in the countenance of Rosella ; “ I have only to hope that my
dear

dear child may be blessed with the regard of a good man, and that she may deserve his affection and confidence by a prudence and steadiness it has been my misfortune not to have possessed.—Mr. Mordaunt is all goodness—I would to heaven I had listened to his friendly remonstrances before I left London upon that fatal expedition, which, by its effects, has deprived me of the happiness of your society!”

“And why should you not indulge your wish and mine?” asked Rosella; “believe me, dearest Madam, I would reject the consideration of what is called the world, if I must purchase it at the expence of a sacrifice so important as the fulfilment of a self-rewarding duty, and the smallest diminution of your contentment.”

“Mr. Mordaunt knows my sentiments upon this painful subject,” returned Miss Beauclerc; “and I must not discuss it with my Rosella. I shall at least have the consolation of reflecting, that every pang I feel will be in the reparation of my errors.”

Their mutual friend now interrupted the *tête-à-tête*, which he was unwilling to suffer of too great a length, and finding both mother and daughter more calm than he had expected, he congratulated them on a meeting so satisfactory; and to disengage the mind of Miss Beauclerc from dwelling too much upon unpleasant recollections, after enquiring her hour of dinner, which he intended, he said, to partake of, he proposed a walk upon the lawn.

She then found leisure to enquire of Rosella the progress of her acquaintance with her aunt Delaval; and dropped some tears in return for the kindness and affection with which she had ever been mentioned by her.

Miss Beauclerc congratulated her with a tender smile upon the independence she had acquired, which she rejoiced in, she said, because it would do much in procuring the favorable opinion of the world.

“ But,”

“ But,” added she, “ I cannot endure that your mother, with so ample a fortune, should make no effort to render your’s more respectable ; and I must request the assistance of our good friend to arrange my affairs, and preserve for you at least the large legacy I received in infancy from my uncle. You will find, Sir,” addressing Mr. Mordaunt, “ that I have been, since the death of my father, shamefully extravagant ; but I had rather blush in your presence for an avowed error, than continue unjust to my child.”

“ Well, well,” replied the good man, “ we all know that houses cannot be fitted up, and estates purchased for nothing : so at present we will say no more upon the subject.”

Rosella was much pleased to be spared a discussion that wounded her feelings ; and she took advantage of a momentary absence of her mother, to entreat that she might not be suffered to deprive herself of any part

of those possessions she herself so little wanted.

“What she can spare,” returned Mr. Mordaunt, “you are well entitled to; but she shall not inconvenience herself.”

At dinner, Rosella missed the old butler, whom she had always been accustomed to see at the sideboard; and when the cloth was removed, she rather inconsiderately mentioned him.

“I am much indebted to poor Simpson, I find,” replied Miss Beauclerc, “since he was indirectly the means of restoring me to a proper mode of thinking—by a violent remedy indeed, but a very salutary one. Disgusted with a servitude which had cost him so dear, he returned to his native place; and there it happens that my selfish cousin lives, who had formerly seen Simpson at my father’s house, and his enquiries drew from the angry old man a recital of all the follies he had witnessed,

nessed, and others which had reached him after his separation from me : Mr. Bristock immediately made a further inquiry into my conduct, and most probably thought himself well authorized to act as he did."

Mr. Mordaunt changed a subject so unpleasant to the whole party ; but Rosella, much shocked that she had inadvertently introduced it, could not recover from her chagrin. The spirits of Miss Beauclerc likewise drooped as the hour of separation drew nigh. When she rose from table, she led Rosella again to her dressing-room, and embracing her with tears she could no longer restrain, gave her a key to the small trunk which had been taken from her by Mr. Bristock, and restored with other things, as he would not, by sending it to Rosella, tacitly avow a charge that had been instituted against him.

" You must take this with you, my dear girl," said Miss Beauclerc ; " and you will

find in it a few baubles I have no further use for; it contains likewise, a picture of your unfortunate father," added she, with a deep sigh, "whom my romantic imprudence conducted to an early grave!"

"Oh do not, dearest Madam," said Rosella, "do not render this meeting, which I have ardently longed for, so inexpressibly painful to me."

"I will not," replied Miss Beauclerc hastily, and wiping her eyes; "no, Rosella, my future study must be to improve your happiness—I have already given you sufficient pain. But I will have done—we will return to our good friend;—let me entreat you however, my love, before we join him, not to betray too much emotion when you quit me, that I may, without appearing selfish, invite you to repeat this indulgence."

Rosella promised to govern herself, and they descended to the apartment where Mr. Mordaunt awaited them, who immediately

diately asked for his coffee; and at seven o'clock he reminded Rosella that they had a few miles to travel, who recollecting the caution she had received, avowed herself ready to accompany him.

Miss Beauclerc would have had the little coffer, of which she had given her the key, put into the chaise; but Mr. Mordaunt, who imagined from its appearance that it contained valuables, would not, he said, be encumbered with baggage, but promised to send a servant for it the next morning; which he thought more safe than venturing it at so dangerous an hour as it must necessarily be before they reached his house.

Miss Beauclerc acquiesced; and accompanying her guests to the door, she presented her hand to her old friend, and embracing his young companion, suddenly withdrew: Rosella, as the chaise drove away, vainly looked up to the dressing-room for a parting glance, whilst Mr. Mordaunt

daunt pretended to admire the landscape from the window on his side ;—she so far recovered herself, however, as to present him a countenance which had some pretensions to cheerfulness, and in a few minutes conversed with calmness and coherency.

They had crept almost a foot pace for about two miles, when Mr. Mordaunt perceiving that it would be impossible to reach town till it was entirely dark, at the rate they travelled, called to the lad to push on; and he was informed in reply, that the poor beasts would do very well when they got warm.

But this favorable event not appearing likely to happen soon, Rosella enquired if it would not be better to send back the groom, and borrow Miss Beauclerc's horses.

“ She would not have suffered us to have left her house in this equipage,” returned Mr. Mordaunt, “ depend upon it, had not
that

that fordid villain, her cousin, instantly sold her carriages and horses when he took possession of Avelines!"

Rosella was hurt at this intelligence almost to tears, but she would not make any comment upon it.

The driver had taken them through Kingston owing to some obstruction in the other road, and with much lashing, coaxing, and swearing, had reached the middle of Putney-heath when one of the animals refused to advance, and every essay to force it forward only increased the dark aspect of affairs, by making it back the chaise into a hollow, where it overturned, in spite of the mutual efforts of the postillion and the servant who followed it.

Neither Mr. Mordaunt nor his companion were in the least hurt, but, for the first time in her life, Rosella heard an oath pass his lips; for it was now very nearly dark,
and

and the place by no means so safe as might have been wished. He cursed the folly of the driver for bringing them that way, and as the lad made no reply, and instead of assisting to disengage the vicious beast from the carriage, stood muttering execrations on his part, he began to fear that there was more of design than accident in the circumstance, especially as in a few minutes after, he distinguished the clattering of horses' hoofs, which approached at full speed.

"Will," cried he to the groom, "have you your pistols?"

The man replied that he did not know of staying so late, and he had not brought them.

"Psha!" ejaculated his master, still more out of temper: "I shall walk forward to the next house," resumed he, taking the arm of Rosella, "when I reach it, you shall ride on, and bring me another chaise."

At

At this moment the horsemen, instead of passing, suddenly stopped ; and Mr. Mordaunt fully expecting the usual demand, was preparing to transfer his cash without bond or obligation, when a voice more courteous, enquired if he wished for assistance.

“ I thank you, Sir,” returned Mr. Mordaunt, “ but I believe our most prudent plan will be what I mentioned.”

“ Is the chaise then damaged ?” asked the stranger.

“ I don’t think it is,” said the post-boy ; “ but I an’t able to fit my horse ; for that devil has almost jammed my leg with the pole.”

“ Why did you not before say that you was hurt ?” exclaimed Mr. Mordaunt in a softer accent than he had hitherto used ; “ if I had been aware of it, do you imagine I would have left you without assistance ?”

The

The stranger, without any further preliminary, dismounted, and with the joint efforts of his own servant and Will, raised the fallen chaise, whilst Mr. Mordaunt held the saddle-horses. Rosella, meantime, offered the boy some hungary-water to bathe his leg, which he thankfully accepted; and as she considered herself to be the primary cause of his misfortune, she put a guinea into his hand, a *largesse* that entirely consoled him for it.

He was quite unable, however, to ride but upon the bar of the chaise, and Mr. Mordaunt not chusing to enter it again, resolved to walk forward as he had intended.

The stranger then bade him good night, and was mounting his horse when Mr. Mordaunt, having again taken the arm of his young charge, exclaimed—

“ You

"You tremble, Rosella, are you still frightened?—Be of good cheer—we shall soon reach a house."

"Rosella!" repeated the gentleman, walking again towards them, "is this Miss Montrefor?"

Her conductor answered in the affirmative, for Rosella was dumb.

"But you, Sir," continued Mr. Mordaunt, "have no companion to announce you to us, either designedly or undesignedly; and I being literally in the dark, and figuratively in the dark, should feel a satisfaction in being enlightened a little!"

The gentleman had given his horse to his servant, and was now walking by their side.

"Miss Montrefor does not recollect my voice?" said he, in a tone of enquiry.

"Yes," replied she, in a hesitating accent, "I believe—I think I do!"

"Will

"Will you have the goodness to prove it," returned he, "by introducing me to this gentleman."

Rosella was silent.

"I beg your pardon, Madam," he continued, "for my presumption. You perceive, Sir," addressing Mr. Mordaunt, "that this lady is far from being anxious to proclaim a name, which she may perhaps imagine will not make a very brilliant figure in the list of her associates; and as that is the case, I have little reason to be forward in announcing myself to any of her friends."

"You are mistaken, Mr. Oberne," cried she.

"A—hem!" issued from the lungs of Mr. Mordaunt, and Rosella no longer knew what she meant to have further said.

The groom now pointed out a light at a small distance, that seemed to proceed from a house by its being stationary; and thither
they

they were glad to hasten for shelter from a heavy shower, which was fast coming on; but to reach it, they were obliged to quit the road, and stumble over the inequalities of a trackless waste. Rosella was still led by Mr. Mordaunt, who being booted, did not observe the various hollows filled with water through which he dragged her; and as she considered the motive from which he had taken this unpleasant excursion, she thought that at least she ought to bear the inconvenience of it with patience and fortitude.

The rain now poured down in torrents, and they were yet a considerable distance from the light, when she found herself walking apparently into a pond, and called to her conductor to stop; at the same moment Oberne, who was acquainted with the spot, caught her up, and carried her through the water, which was only knee deep—a temerity the elder gentleman very wisely chose not to hazard, but marched back again, and
took

took a considerable circuit to rejoin his fair charge, who was scarcely landed when she heard Mr. Mordaunt hallooing to her, and would have answered the call in person, but that Oberne would not suffer it; he urged her towards the shelter, which was nearer than he had supposed it, and with some difficulty they at length reached it.

A woman who was, she said, just going to bed, and indeed it was the light in the upper apartment of her little tenement that had attracted the wanderers, stepped down, and opened the door: but alas! there was no fire in the cottage, nor had she any fuel but a bundle or two of sticks her children had picked up on the heath, and they were too wet to light immediately, because they had not been houled in the form.

Oberne, who saw Rosella pale, fatigued, and forlorn, was inexpressibly uneasy, and waited the arrival of Mr. Mordaunt with impatience, that they might hold a council
of

of war, whether even when a chaise was procured, she ought to venture into it with her wet garments; and she was equally anxious for his arrival on his own account, for the storm had increased to a hurricane of wind, accompanied by hail, rain, thunder, and tremendous flashes of lightning. Yet neither Mr. Mordaunt nor the men appeared, and she began to fear that he had unfortunately turned into a deeper part of the water, and that his calling had been the result of distress.

Shocked to agony by this supposition, she would have run out to seek him, had not Oberne prevented her by a superior exertion of strength.

“For Heaven’s sake,” exclaimed he, “pay some attention to yourself!—I will go in search of your friend, if you will promise to remain here.”

“Run—fly then!” returned she; “he is drowned—I am sure he is!”

Oberne

Oberne asserted that it was not possible; but he instantly left the cottage, and she heard his voice echo over the heath till the sound died away, and then her imagination was dreadfully busy in the most cruel conjectures.

The woman saw her extreme agitation, and asked if any of her company had strayed?—Rosella informing her of the accident she apprehended, learned that there was no water, for a considerable way round, deep enough to drown any body; but to counteract this good intelligence, the dame said it was much more likely the poor gentleman was beset by rogues, and belike murdered. Her guest shuddered, and the woman then proceeded to state that a man had had his throat cut, not above a month back, within a quarter of a mile of the place; and was entering into every particular of the murder, but that Rosella entreated her to forbear.

Not

“ Not to be entirely idle, and in the hope perhaps of a reward, the confederate dame then undertook to make a fire with the wet wood ; and after having filled her cabin with a smoke so thick that it drove her fair inmate more than once into the storm to recover her breath, she at length succeeded in kindling a blaze ; but Rosella could not feel cheered by it whilst Mr. Mordaunt and Oberne remained unsheltered, and in a state of alarm and distress that almost annihilated her faculties, she waited half an hour without intelligence of either.

A violent knocking at the door then awakened her expectation ; but the woman of the house began to tremble and change color, from the recollection of the story she had been so cruelly prevented, from dwelling upon in all its horrors, and she would not suffer Rosella to open it before she had made circumstantial enquiries of the person without.

“Havn’t you got a young lady here, Mother Smith?” returned a hoarse voice.

“Lack-a-daify, it’s Jack Willis!” cried the dame, unbolting the entrance.

Rosella discovered the figure of Oberne immediately behind that of the man, and eagerly asked if Mr. Mordaunt were safe?

“Perfectly so,” he replied; “he missed this cottage, and was admitted into another, where he has been much alarmed.—You wear mourning!” exclaimed he, interrupting himself, “I hope you have not lost a very dear friend?”

“It is for poor Mrs. Delaval that I mourn,” returned Rosella; “but tell me, am I to seek out Mr. Mordaunt, or will he join me here?”

“The man is gone to conduct him hither,” replied Oberne.

Rosella then resumed her seat, and the woman ran out for her last bundle of wood.

As

As Oberne leant against the dark chimney-side, she thought, as the light gleamed upon his face, that he was much altered ; and the intelligence of Povey suddenly recurring to her, she enquired, in an accent of kindness, if he had been indisposed since she had last the pleasure of seeing him.

“ The *pleasure* of seeing me ! ” repeated he abruptly ; “ you had likewise the pleasure of seeing me solicit your notice for ten minutes, in vain : yet this was not according to the tenor of our compact at Dumbarton.”

Rosella remembered that this compact alluded to his expected change of circumstances.

“ Indeed,” said she earnestly, “ you mistake, and do me injustice in supposing that I could have been guilty of such rudeness to any one, much less could I have voluntarily lowered myself in the opinion of Mr. Oberne,

to whom I acknowledge that I am indebted for many polite and humane attentions, at a moment I much required them."

"Then we are still good friends?" asked he, taking a chair by her side.

"Yes, I hope so."

"Well then, my amiable Rosella, I will tell you all that has happened to me since I saw you."

The woman now entered with the fuel; but, disregarding her presence, he continued—

"I was called to London upon business, which I will not trouble you to listen to; but I must mention that it was of a nature to strip me by a litigation of all that my improvidence had left. A man, closely allied to me by consanguinity, offered to take my affairs into his hands, if I would transfer for a proper consideration, my right in the disputed estate to him. But this I refused, merely, perhaps, because it was urged too warmly;

warmly; and the person, offended by my obstinacy, endeavored to force my compliance by distressing me through the means of an agent, who was instructed to lend me money to defend the litigation, and then arrest me for it."—Rosella shuddered.—“I see you are acquainted with the circumstance,” resumed Oberne; “indeed it was too public for a possibility of concealment, yet I imagined it might not have reached your ear.—You know then, that by an extreme resemblance between Lord Clanallan and myself, the very people he had employed to disgrace a brother, mistakenly forced him into confinement, and treated him with considerable personal violence, which acting upon the most irritable temper, has nearly destroyed a health already undermined by dissipation. I discovered the collusion to betray me; but at the earnest request of Lord Clanallan, I forbore to punish the perfidy of his agent, and rode this morning to a small place he has taken on Norebeton Common to avoid his associates, that I might see him,

as he expressed himself, before he dies; but I believe his dejection operates to make him fear that his dissolution is much nearer than I apprehend it to be."

"It was not you then," said Rosella, "who was hurt in St. James's-street?"

"Did you hear that it was me?" asked Oberne.

"Yes, I heard it with extreme regret."

"If so," cried he, "I am almost sorry that I must relinquish my claim to so kind and generous a concern."

"I will promise to renew it then," said Rosella, with more apparent gaiety than she really felt, "the next misadventure in which I may chance to hear you are engaged."

"You are obligingly provident," returned he; "but I must entreat that you will not throw away all your compassion upon a broken head or a broken fortune, since there is another still more serious evil as likely to overtake me as either."

She looked for an explanation.

"Oh

“ Oh Madam !” continued he, assuming an air of levity, “ can it be difficult to discover that I mean a broken heart ?”—Rosella smiled.—“ To be more serious—I have felt a strange *vacuum* in my bosom since I quitted you—I have been most unaccountably inclined to melancholy and contemplation—I have experienced a mortal abhorrence of the thoughtless extravagance which has injured my fortune—and I have a thousand times wished to ask you, if you could condescend to live——”

Where, or in what manner, Rosella could not hear, for the return of Mr. Mordaunt interrupted what she conceived to be the most interesting epoch of the interview.

“ My dear child,” exclaimed he, “ I am glad to find you so comfortably situated.—I expect William every moment with a chaise, and I hope you will not remain long enough in your dripping garments to catch a fever ;

but we must both expect a cold and fore-throat at least."

"God forbid!" cried Oberne; "situated as I have been these ten minutes last," he added with his usual openness, "I had forgotten the necessity of a removal; but with such a dread as you have now inspired, I must regret the charming *tête-à-tête* Fortune has obliged me with."

"Dame," said Mr. Mordaunt to the good woman, who did not understand the compliment implied to her in the latter part of Oberne's speech, "I suppose, as it is past your bed-time, you have been sleeping in your chair."

"No, please your Honor," returned she simpering, "I han't been sleeping, only I thought the young gentleman and the young lady seemed to have so much to say to each other, that I fancied my cackle would be troublesome."

Rosella now turned from the candle, which was flaring in the socket, that her crimsoned cheek

cheek might not be discerned, especially when the well-remembered "A-hem" faluted her ear; and she was not displeased when the sound of a carriage stopping near the door of the cottage, promised to relieve her from an embarrassment that grew insupportable, from the silence that succeeded the woman's notable speech; for Oberne, recollecting the unreserved communication he had made in her presence, to which it appeared she had not been so inattentive as he had imagined, was himself rather disconcerted.

The groom opened the door to announce the chaise; and Mr. Mordaunt looking out, observed that the rain was still more violent than it had yet been, and it occurred to him that humanity must oblige him to offer Oberne a place in the carriage; a proposition he very eagerly accepted.

The disasters of the evening appeared now to be overcome; and the good woman, who

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had

had proved herself to be so patient a listener to an imaginary *tête-à-tête*, found reason to congratulate herself that her repose had been so fortunately, for her at least, disturbed.

The first mile or two was passed in silence ; and Mr. Mordaunt then awakening from a reverie, addressed himself to Oberne--

“ Miss Montresor has informed me,” said he, “ that I, with her other friends, have acknowledgments to return you, Sir, for your considerate assistance when she found herself in a very unpleasant situation ; and it gives me sensible pleasure that I have thus met with an opportunity of offering them, at a moment when I have witnessed your disinterested humanity in behalf of people, to whom you supposed yourself a stranger.”

Oberne returned a polite answer ; but Rosella silently remarked that it was devoid of that vivacity which generally characterized his replies.

As

As they entered Piccadilly, Mr. Mordaunt enquired where he would wish to be set down; and as Oberne did not chuse to detain Rosella a moment longer, than would be found necessary in the uncomfortable chilled state she must necessarily be, he begged the chaise might stop at a coach-stand.

“ But will Miss Montresor allow me,” continued he, taking her hand, “ to enquire to-morrow, how she has endured this unmerciful soaking?”

Rosella hesitated; for the fidgets and apophthegms of Mrs. Methwald rushed to her memory, and she would perhaps have declined seeing him in spite of her inclination to the contrary, had not Mr. Mordaunt replied to the request by giving him a card of address, and saying, that young ladies of the present day were not much to be found at home; but if Mr. Oberne would take the trouble to enquire for him, he should be happy to see him at one o'clock.

Oberne, however disappointed, took the hint, and accepted the appointment ; and the chaise then stopping to let him out, he pressed the hand of Rosella, which he still held, bade her good night, and repeating the compliment to Mr. Mordaunt, they separated.

“ It was fortunate, my dear,” observed the old gentleman, “ that this good-humored fellow, this Oberne *happened* to be on the road.”

Rosella, imagining from this intimation that he supposed Oberne had not been unacquainted with the expedition, was hurt that he should entertain such an idea.

“ He told me,” replied she, “ that he was returning from a visit to Lord Clanallan.”

“ I never heard,” said Mr. Mordaunt, “ that his brother had any seat on this road ; but it is of very little consequence to the world

world where he plants himself: for I believe he is a most worthless fellow, and I have been informed that he has used this young man very ill."

Rosella was silent; nor did her companion renew the conversation before they reached home.

CHAP. VIII.

Maiden perseverance—and an unfashionable young woman of fashion.

MRS. METHWALD was not yet returned from her dinner visit; and Rosella, delighted to escape her fastidious and formal conversation, retired immediately to her

chamber, having received an injunction from Mr. Mordaunt to take care of herself; an attention he seconded by sending Mrs. Methwald's maid to see that every precaution was used to prevent her from catching cold.

The first thing Rosella discovered, on entering her apartment, was a letter on the dressing-table, which she was informed, had been placed there, in the morning, by the lady of the house. She seized it with a curious hand, and on breaking the seal, discerned the writing of Mrs. Methwald, who took this method of informing her, amidst innumerable professions of friendship, and many very wise and pretty sentences, that she could not possibly think of offering her the house where she presided, as a permanent asylum, as circumstances might arise to make her own stay there uncertain; then followed many other reasons why the thing could not be thought of, the most forcible of which was, that two people who would fly voluntarily, and with impatience, to enjoy

enjoy the society of each other ten months out of the twelve, would travel to the extremities of the globe rather than be compelled to endure each other for six.

“As the lady has been married,” thought Rosella, “she speaks from experience, I suppose.”

“You will think this,” continued Mrs. Methwald’s letter, “a very frightful picture of human nature; but I fear it is a just one.”

“It is a just picture of a spoiled child,” repeated Rosella internally, “and it may be a just picture of the temper of a childish, capricious woman; but that it is a just picture of human nature, and may be indiscriminately applied, is I hope, only the error of a writer of sentences, who to turn a phrase smartly, would in matters of opinion, almost turn Mahometan.”

The

The conclusion of this letter, which Nancy did not suffer her to read without many remonstrances, softened extremely however ; for it entreated that Rosella would consider herself as a welcome visiter in the house, where her brother would always be glad to see her, and hoped that her visits would be long and frequent ; but Mrs. Methwald further added, that she would promise, in order that both Miss Montresor and herself might feel more at liberty and independent of each other, that when she was engaged to families of such rank and distinction that her young inmate, from not being used to such society, might feel uncomfortable in it, she would, with the familiarity of friendship, leave her at home.

“ I am obliged to you, Madam !” ejaculated Rosella, as her memory presented her with the contents of this epistle, whilst she reposed her head on the pillow ; “ it is certainly a most considerate precaution, to spare those

those blushes my rusticity might otherwise occasion you and myself."

As she reflected upon this very prudent letter, she felt puzzled how to act. Mrs. Methwald had tacitly allowed her to accept the hospitable proposition of her brother, without urging any objection; and now, in a manner that appeared to forbid an open discussion, she put a *veto* upon it!

"What," thought she, "ought to be the extent of my visits?—What am I to understand by the indefinite terms, long and frequent?—A month is certainly a long visit; but if I am urgent to quit the house at the end of that period, what caprice and ingratitude may not Mr. Mordaunt accuse me of?"

Vexed, and uncertain of what she ought to do—with the subject of Oberne's expected conference with her old friend intervening every moment to perplex her still more,
she

she at length sunk to rest, after having resolved to acquaint Mr. Ellinger with her dilemma, who would she imagined, hint it to Mr. Mordaunt, or assist her in deciding what it would be most proper to do. To her mother she would not complain or appeal, from the fear of disturbing her quiet, or transferring an anxiety to her bosom, she rather chose to endure wholly herself.

The next morning she rose with a cold and slight cough, but not of sufficient importance to retain her in the house, and she found that Mr. Mordaunt had escaped wonderfully—a circumstance that consoled her for the unpleasant sensation she experienced when she was left alone with Mrs. Methwald after breakfast; but the good lady found out so many subjects to expatiate upon in succession, that Rosella had as little opportunity as inclination to advert to the letter. Indeed she began, when the clock had struck twelve, to attend more to the opening of the street-door than to the conversation

fation of her companion ; and as the moment of appointment approached, her absence and anxiety increased. A carriage at length stopped before the house, but no rap followed.

“ I am going to make purchases this morning,” said Mrs. Methwald, “ and should be glad of your company.”

Rosella bowed ; she did not venture to excuse herself, lest the lady, on learning the visit of Oberne, should suppose her refusal originated in indecorous motives ; she forgot however, to put on her cloak and gloves, and Mrs. Methwald was obliged to wait whilst she equipped herself—a situation, she afterwards said, Mrs. Creffy had never placed her in, to the day of her marriage.

When they had driven about for nearly two hours, the business of this sententious personage had exhausted itself, and she condescended to ask Rosella if she wished to call
any

any where in the neighbourhood, before she returned home.

“ But I recollect,” added Mrs. Methwald, “ that my brother told me you had not seen Mr. Ellinger since your journey ; and as I believe it would be right that you should not fail in attention to him, the carriage shall take you to Chancery-lane, whilst I call in upon a friend in Brook-street ; but you will have the goodness not to detain me too long.—I am sorry I cannot accompany you to the house of your guardian ; for really the manners and associates of his family are so different from mine, that I——”

“ To me, Madam,” said Rosella gravely, “ no apology can surely be necessary.—I am much obliged to you for the opportunity you so considerately offer me, of obeying any intimation Mr. Mordaunt condescends to give me.”

When she had set down her unpleasant companion in Brook-street, Rosella once more

more bent her way to the residence of Mr. Ellinger, who was now at home, and received her with much civility.

When the usual salutations were past, he made a grievous complaint of the scandalous imprudence of his wife, and congratulated his ward upon her acquisition of fortune.

“ Mr. Povey,” added he, “ was here yesterday, to make proposals to you ; and I think, child, considering all things, you ought to snap at them ;—a prudent match just now would set every thing right again. So I advised him to apply to your good friend Mordaunt, and told him I would give him all my interest ; and he promised, if no engagement interfered, that he would call upon him as soon as he was up to-day ; but I dare say that will not be till twelve or one, for he is an idle dog when there is any business in hand.”

Rosella

Rosella had hitherto sat in silent surprise at this intelligence; but when Mr. Ellinger mentioned twelve or one o'clock, she started up in an emotion not to be repressed, and declared her abhorrence of a man who could treat her with such insult and impertinence as she had experienced from Mr. Povey.

The dowager Mrs. Ellinger at this moment entered the room, rubbing the flour and paste from her hands with a handkerchief that bore the marks of rappee.

"Bless me, my dear," exclaimed she, "why you seem in tip-top spirits!—Aye, Miss, such good offers don't happen to every body;—what though you've got your pocket full of money, let me tell you a good husband, that will take care of it, is not to be had every day in the week."

"If you mean Mr. Povey," replied Rosella, with considerable impatience in her accent and manner, "which I suppose from
what

what Mr. Ellinger has said, I shall never give him that trouble, Madam."

The old woman raised her hands and her handkerchief in surprise.

"A-hey day!" exclaimed she, "what maggot's in the wind now!"

Rosella, rather ashamed of her warmth, contemplated a retreat; and turning to Mr. Ellinger, told him that she would take another opportunity of speaking to him upon an affair, concerning which she wished to take his advice.

"Stay, child, stay," replied he, "what is your haste?—Take my advice now, and don't turn up your nose at what I have proposed:—let me tell you that Povey will be pretty well off, marry or not marry; for his uncle is a snug old fellow, and has no other heir than him."

"Mis.

“ Mrs. Methwald will, I fear, be displeased,” interrupted Rosella, “ if I detain the carriage any further.”

“ Well then send it away, and dine with us,” cried the old lady, “ and we will send for Povey, and settle matters this blessed day.—Come, come, I see you only want a little begging and praying.”

“ Mr. Povey’s character,” said Rosella firmly, “ appears to me in a light so unfavorable, that no persuasion should induce me to receive his addresses ; which I am convinced he would never have made to me, had he not learned the legacy of my poor friend Mrs. Delaval.”

“ Aye, child,” returned Mr. Ellinger, “ I wanted to talk to you about that.—Mr. Mordaunt can now take you into his own house, now you have got twenty thousand pounds to your fortune—when you had not two, you could be suffered to live with me ;—and as to the objection of my wife being away, that’s all nothing : though to be sure I expected our friend, the good lady at Avelines,

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Avelines, would have interfered and adjusted matters a little, as there was always such an affection between them.—Here have I paid three hundred pounds, all bills which Mrs. Ellinger contracted without my knowledge! And it is, she must needs confess, very hard upon me that I should be saddled with the whole, when Mrs. Ellinger was always spared to attend upon Miss Beauclerc whenever she was wanted, and was never backward, I must say for her, to execute any commission that was given her;—and this, my dear, I hope you will represent to the good lady.—But I was saying, as to the objection of your being here—why, if Miss Beauclerc desires it, I will take Mrs. Ellinger home——”

“Take her home!” repeated the dowager; “and would you be such a fool, after what I have told you over and over, that you would be poisoned with dirt, and sent to a jail?—But I see how it is; I’ll pack up my alls, and leave you to your trolloping fine lady!—The house don’t hold her and me,

mind that, Sam—I don't stay neither, to be the slave, and snubbed by a dawdle that can't make an apple-dumpling!—No, no—but so it is with you all—the poor mother's sent a trudging, and the wife's lady-paramount all the world over!—Such a wife as your's indeed, with her milliner's bills, and all her scores unpaid!”

Rosella, shocked, frightened, and disgusted, repeated that Mrs. Methwald would be distressed for the carriage; and in the confusion of accusation and recriminating violence that ensued, made her escape, and was half a mile from the house before either party recollected themselves.

The time had, however, appeared longer than it was in reality; Mrs. Methwald was not ready to return home, and the lady of the house sent to beg Miss Montrefor would walk up stairs.

Rosella

Rosella was ushered into a drawing-room, where an elderly, formal-looking, very plain gentlewoman just peeped in, and making a half-curtsey, returned to an adjoining apartment, to continue a confidential communication to her dear friend Mrs. Methwald. But it happened that, as she was rather deaf, her companion was compelled to raise her voice to be heard; and the lady herself usually spoke in a loud key, that she might distinguish her own accents; so that Rosella, without any intention of listening, could hear the principal part of the conversation.

“My dear Madam,” said the mistress of the mansion, “I know not how I can express my gratitude for the kind concern you take in my welfare—I fear you will be tired of my detail.”

“By no means,” returned Mrs. Methwald, raising her voice much above its usual querulous pitch; “I beg I may be inform-

ed of the whole, since you do me the honor to think me worthy of your confidence."

"My *dear* Ma'am!" exclaimed the other; "well, I believe I was telling you of the cruel flights I have received since his return to town. I no sooner heard of the selfish machinations of his brother, than I begged to speak with the faithless Oberne; for I still regard him as my betrothed husband, in spite of his desertion, as I conceive that I am not warranted in breaking through my engagements because he is regardless of his."

"Ah Madam," screamed Mrs. Methwald, "your principles are so exemplary!"

"*Dear* Ma'am!—well, but I wrote, I entreated, I expostulated in vain;—he had the heart to send me in answer, that he thought the most injurious part of his brother's conduct was that which had entangled him in the slightest semblance of attachment or engagement, where I well knew neither the one nor the other existed.—This, Madam, was cruel, and you might have supposed

posed decisive ; but no difficulty could impede my efforts to act with the utmost propriety and honor !—I told him he had tacitly plighted me his faith, though not at the altar ; but I considered him equally my own, and that I was firmly his, and his I would continue to be.—The barbarian ! what an answer did he send me !—His affections were engaged to a most amiable and lovely young woman, he said, at whose feet he meant to lay himself and his fortunes, broken as they were ; nor should the absurd plans and iniquitous schemes of Lord Clannallan prevent his happiness, if no more potent obstacle intervened.”

“ Horrible !” exclaimed Mrs. Methwald.

“ Admirable !” soliloquized Rosella ; for she hoped that she was the object thus cherished. “ This then,” thought she, “ is the woman whom he mentioned to me—it is singular enough that chance should have conducted me to her house !”

“ But, Madam,” continued the deaf *enamorata*, “ I hear that his brother is at the point of death; and I think I may entertain reasonable hopes that my infidel, when he has the honor of his title and family to maintain, will give up any imprudent plan he may have formed, and return to his allegiance and to happiness.—I hear too, that the creature who has fascinated him, is a little adventurer, whom he met with at——”

At this moment a violent rapping at the street-door prevented Rosella from distinguishing what this slighted but pertinacious *dulcina* further said. A servant threw open the door of the apartment where she sat, and was going to announce a lady who immediately followed him, but stopped on observing that the drawing-room was only occupied by Rosella.

“ If my aunt is engaged,” said the new visitant, “ inform her that I am not in haste.”

Rosella,

Rosella, at the first glance, recognized Lady Lucy. Estcourt ; but as she was doubtful in what light she should herself be beheld, she merely bowed in silence, in return for her salutation.

“ I believe I have the pleasure of seeing Miss Montresor,” said the amiable young woman, extending her hand to Rosella with unaffected complacency ; “ and I cannot forget that I have her pardon, to entreat for a very impertinent commission with which I entrusted Mr. Delamere at Guairdy.—Believe me, Madam,” continued she, “ when our good old friend Mr. Mordaunt, undeceived me, and I discovered the error I had adopted, however mortified I could not fail to be at my own officiousness and want of discernment, I experienced a satisfaction and pleasure, which your forgiveness will completely ratify ; and if I did not fear that you would add to my list of offences, an effort to make my peace by adulation, I should venture to predict, from the amiable cha-

racter of your countenance, that I need not despair."

"And I too should fear," replied Rosella, pressing the hand she held, "that if your Ladyship could translate the sentiments that now contend for utterance, I should be accused of an admiration almost enthusiastic!"

"Oh you flatterer!" exclaimed Lady Lucy; "however I accept your compliment; and now you cannot refuse me your friendship without retracting."

Rosella eagerly declared that she considered this overture as the most delightful favor Fortune could bestow upon her: and whilst Lady Lucy waited the appearance of her aunt, they entered into a conversation confidential, in some degree, on either side; for though they had hitherto so little met, they experienced a reciprocal sentiment of goodwill, that distanced the forms of a recent or slight acquaintance.

"Mr.

“ Mr. Delamere informed me,” said Lady Lucy, “ that you much interested yourself for an unhappy young man whom chance threw in your way in the North. Perhaps you have not heard his fate ? ”

Rosella replied that she had not.

“ He could not be prevailed upon to withdraw from the pursuit instituted against him,” resumed Lady Lucy, “ when he learned the destiny of his unfortunate family ; but he could not endure the misery of his reflections, when in his confinement he had nothing to divert his mind from them even a moment, and he ended his life by his own hand ! ”

Rosella shuddered.

“ Poor Mompeffon ! ” exclaimed she.

“ His sisters,” added the fair informant, “ have not, I believe, recovered their reason ;

nor do I think the circumstance at all to be desired !”

Rosella gave her concurrent opinion, and a silence of a few seconds ensued, which Lady Lucy at length interrupted.

“ My good aunt,” said she, smiling, “ is engaged, I understand, with her confidante Mrs. Methwald ; and I hope my dear Miss Montefor will excuse the inattention of a poor, deserted, love-sick lady, especially as she is herself the cause of the misfortune, I believe !”

“ Me, Ma’am !” said Rosella with a deep blush.

“ I am apprehensive that you will think me impertinent, a second time,” resumed the other, taking her hand, and speaking in a lower voice ; “ yet I must inform you how the affair stands, for fear you should fancy a certain gentleman in fault in this very dark business.—My aunt Venables, who has certainly, poor lady, been rather unfortunate

in her attachments, fixed upon Oberne two winters back, as her adorer for the season ; and as he had then spent his younger brother's portion, and meant, like Orlando, to "go seek his fortunes," Lord Clanallan endeavored to make him improve upon the favorable opinion of the lady ; but the youth was stubborn, and with much difficulty was entrapped into one solitary visit, which was however, construed by my good aunt into a declaration. I would not," added Lady Lucy, "have hazarded your censure by this explanation, which most probably, you think it does not become me to give ; only that I fear, from the long conference in the dressing-room, you may be induced to believe a different story by and by."

Rosella imagined she ought to disclaim all interest in the conduct of Oberne ; but her faltering tongue and blushing cheek contradicted her words, and Lady Lucy laughed at the protest.

“To set you an example of sincerity,” said she, “I will confess to you that the business which brings me to town to-day, is a compliment I think it right to pay my poor aunt, by informing her in person of a change of name that will soon take place in the family; but to say the truth, my confidence will not have the merit of being of long standing, as I could not have concealed the circumstance from you three days hence.”

Encouraged by this good-humored unreserve, Rosella mentioned Mr. Delamere, and enquired if she had guessed right. Lady Lucy replied in the affirmative, and received the sincere congratulations of her new friend, who felt concerned that the entrance of Miss Venables and Mrs. Methwald now interrupted the *tête-à-tête*.

Her *chaperon* coldly pronounced her name, and the lady of the mansion bowed in a supercilious manner, and thus passed the introduction.

As

As Mrs. Methwald marched gravely down stairs when she had taken her leave, Lady Lucy stopped Rosella in the anti-room, and said in a whisper—

“ It is all over with you—you are discovered to be the thief!—If you should survive your repentance, I will hope to have the real pleasure of receiving you as my first visiter when I have an establishment of my own.”

Rosella, highly gratified, returned a look of delighted assent, and followed Mrs. Methwald, who in a fit of spleen, to which she was rather subject, had popped into her carriage, and left her guest to follow at leisure—a slight which in her present happy temper of mind, was entirely unheeded.

CHAP. IX.

Incertitude—a husband's sketch of a decorous wife.

IT was four o'clock when they reached home; and Rosella, spite of the satisfaction the offered friendship of Lady Lucy afforded her, could not avoid reflecting with agitation, that Oberne had had the expected conference with Mr. Mordaunt, whose prudence had perhaps annihilated his hopes: she recollected likewise, with vexation, the presumption of Povey; and longed, yet dreaded, to meet the countenance of her old friend.

Her

Her expectations of a private conference with him, however, were completely crushed, when she learned that Mr. and Mrs. Creffy dined with the family, besides a gentleman or two. But a sudden idea struck her, that one of the other visitants, thus characterized by Nancy as a gentleman or two, might possibly be Oberne; and she hastily dressed herself, that she might be first in the drawing-room. Yet the lady of the house had already preceded her, because Mrs. Creffy was arrived; and Rosella endeavoring to restrain her expectations, sat in a state of painful incertitude and emotion.

At length Mr. Mordaunt appeared; but he accosted her without any peculiar meaning in his eye, and she eagerly watched in vain for a sentence, a word, or signal that she could translate in favor of her wishes: he slightly mentioned, indeed, their mischance of the preceding evening, but the name of Oberne did not escape his lips.

To

To increase her disquiet, Mr. Cressy, who was a professed man of taste, and a connoisseur of fashionable attractions, tormented her with assurances of an improved manner; and very seriously declared that her *tournure* was charming.

Mrs. Cressy smiled, and nodded her approbation of these encouraging informations, and even her mother assented; but not without a change of color, and a motion of the head that looked suspicious.

Old Philip, who acted as groom of the chambers, now threw open the drawing-room door, and announced Mr. Lesley. Rosella was disappointed; but she would not even yet give up her hopes, till they descended to dinner without evincing any expectation of an addition to the party, and her spirits then sunk in proportion as they had been buoyant before.

Mr.

Mr. Cressy, who sat next her, and imagined that she was overwhelmed with timidity upon this occasion, affected to encourage her, that she might shake it off; and Mr. Mordaunt, who liked neither his niece nor her husband, was rather silent; but Mrs. Cressy made up for his taciturnity by an incessant cant gabble, composed of shreds of incomprehensible philosophy, common-place chit-chat occurrences, *bon-mots* uttered in her box at the Opera, the brilliant achievements of English Admirals, and the Spartan harangues of the French Directory, mixed up with a perpetual tide of smiles and simpers, and occasional allusions to the excellent arrangements of her own establishment, rather at the expence of that which her mother supervised.

All this was evidently directed to Mr. Lesley, who stemmed the torrent, or sailed with the stream, as well as he was able, and contrived, now and then, to call the momentary attention of Rosella, by an occasional appeal to her sentiments and opinion.

When

When the ladies withdrew after dinner, Mrs. Methwald retired with her daughter to her own dressing-room, to repeat the history of Miss Venables and Oberne ; and Rosella threw herself into a seat in the drawing-room, well pleased to be thus left to the indulgence of her reflections, which wholly occupied her for a length of time she was so little aware of, that she was surprised to see Mr. Lesley walk into the apartment, when she could not have imagined that the dining-room party had begun to disperse.

He looked round very cautiously, as if the everlasting prattle of Mrs. Cressy were still ringing in his ears, and he feared to behold her at his elbow ; but finding himself agreeably mistaken, he hastened to Rosella, and with scarcely any preliminary, dreading perhaps an interruption from the return of the ladies, or the entrance of the gentlemen, he entreated her permission to apply to Mr. Mordaunt for his countenance in addressing her.

Rosella

Rosella, indignant at a precipitation that indicated a tolerable assurance of success, and confused at the nature of the demand, hesitated for an answer, when the voice of Mr. Cressy in the adjoining room added to her agitation.

“ You do not forbid me then ? ” said Lesley.

She had not time to undeceive him before Mr. Cressy entered, who fancying he had made an important discovery, turned from the lady to the gentleman with a very significant smile, and hinted rather plainly at the style of conversation he believed he had interrupted ; whilst Rosella endeavored in vain to shut her ears against his *innuendos*, which created in her an impatience she could scarcely control ; nor did Mrs. Cressy, when she condescended to re-appear, hear them with more *sang froid*.

Her

Her husband, as much pleased with his newly possessed secret as a monkey is with a piece of looking glass, flew off after coffee, to circulate it amongst those of his associates who remained in town; and the dearth of topics from the deadness of the season, joined to his industry, had in a very short space the expected effect of rendering entirely public the approaching marriage of Lady Morteyne's brother with Mr. Mordaunt's ward; who was talked of under a variety of characters, amongst which that of the amiable and captivating young heiress began to preponderate.

The next morning her good old friend desired that she would follow him into his study; and when she was seated, he put on his spectacles in silence, and rummaged amongst some papers for nearly five minutes, exclaiming at intervals—

“ Psha—that is not it—yes—no—I have mislaid it !”

“ Can

“ Can I assist your search ?” said Rosella, with a palpitating heart ; “ may I enquire what you miss ?”

“ A letter, my dear—a letter that relates to you.”

“ To me, Sir !”

“ Yes, yes—you are surprised, I suppose, that I should receive a letter relating to you ; and I am equally, and more unaffectedly, surprised at the assurance of the fellow.”

Rosella, who was thinking of Oberne, felt chagrined and hurt.

“ You are no longer,” resumed the old man, “ Rosella Montresor, possessing merely a competency, whom the swarm of money-hunting puppies would have overlooked !—No—you are now charming, fascinating !—You are amiable, accomplished, and irresistible it seems !—And since the death of your good friend, and your acquisition of fortune, you are suddenly so improved in loveliness, that I have received in your behalf

two

two tenders of wounded hearts, and very deep palmed hands, which a less sum than thirty thousand pounds would not fill up."

Rosella could not reply with vivacity to this just observation; indeed she hoped that it was not just—she hoped that Oberne would have acted in the same manner, had she still been the insignificant Rosella Montresor, with only two thousand pounds to present him. How great then was her surprise to find, that poor or rich, an unprotected orphan, or a wealthy ward, Oberne thought not of her! at least he had not given any proof that he did; for the two proposals Mr. Mordaunt spoke of, were from the unthought-of Povey, and Mr. Lesley: the first by letter, the second in person before he withdrew on the preceding evening.

The countenance of Rosella betrayed a very strongly-marked disappointment; but her old friend appeared not to observe it.

"As

“As for this Povey,” said he, “you will not be displeased, I suppose, if I reject his suit, though my coadjutor, Ellinger, favors his pretensions it seems; but that is easily accounted for: he imagines that if this puppy obtains your money, he will not be in a hurry to resume his quill; and young Ellinger, I hear, has made himself useful to the uncle, who, since his hopeful nephew deserted him, has undertaken to advance the lad’s interest.—But Mr. Lesley’s application deserves attention; and, if my advice has any weight, you will take time to reflect upon it. He is a young man of family, possesses a respectable property, and is nobly allied.”

Rosella would scarcely suffer Mr. Mor-daunt to conclude the sentence—

“Ah Sir!” exclaimed she, “did you not this moment say, that but for the kind remembrance of Mrs. Delaval, this man would probably not have condescended to notice me?”

me? and can I experience any gratitude for an attachment so mercenary?"

"There, there!" returned Mr. Mordaunt, "now you must sport your romance and heroics!—I thought, child, you had been surfeited of such folly.—In the name of God, do you suppose a man is to cull a wife out of a dairy or a hay-field, to prove that he is disinterested?—Or that he is to provide a race of beggars to his family name, to shew the world that he despises the dross that is to buy them bread?—If you don't mean to accept the proposals of any man till you are assured that he is wholly indifferent to your fortune, by all means divest yourself of every farthing, and wait till you are sought after portionless and destitute."

Rosella saw that he was displeased, and suppressed what further she wished to urge; yet she found in herself so great a repugnance to encourage, even tacitly, any idea that she could be induced from motives of interest, or as Mr. Mordaunt might have
said,

said, of prudence, to admit the suit of Mr. Lesley, that she ventured, when he became calm, to say so.

“ Psha !” ejaculated he ; “ I shall not take an answer this day or two.—Stay—I almost forgot to tell you that I think you had better not mention to whom we were obliged for assistance the other night, unless indeed you are questioned upon the subject ; for it may be thought singular that the young gentleman should *happen* to be on the road so opportunely, and you are not ignorant of the vile, ill-natured babble that has been circulated.—By the way, the exchange I proposed, that you might not be compelled to stay at home the whole of yesterday morning, was not approved by Mr. Oberne ; for it *happened* that he forgot the appointment. I might perhaps in the interview have thought and spoken of the future and the past, and it may be that he has only a taste for contemplating the present : and besides this, I am free to confess that there is a

trifling perceptible difference between a handsome young woman and a crabbed old fellow."

"You have not seen Mr. Oberne then?" said Rosella, in a tone of half-stifled vexation.

"Neither have I heard any thing of him," replied he.

She felt mortified, but would not venture any comment; and her old friend being compelled at this moment to attend to other business, they parted.

Wherefore should Oberne, who was all openness, avoid a conversation with Mr. Mordaunt? was a question she repeated several times.—He had been she thought, too explicit to be mistaken; yet if her hopes should have misled her—if Oberne, in his letter to Miss Venables had alluded to another!—This supposition was too painful to be long entertained, and at length she soothed her inquietude by concluding that the
report

report of her increased fortune had reached him, and prevented the intended application. This obstacle she ardently wished to remove, and end at once the expectations Mr. Lesley might have formed, which she would have done, notwithstanding her reluctance to irritate her well-meaning and affectionate adviser, but that the everlasting presence and watchful eye of Mrs. Cressy perpetually prevented the *tête-à-tête* which he sought, and which Rosella would not avoid.

Ten days passed in a suspense and inquietude she could ill conceal: in this interval she received her little *coffre-fort* from her mother, and was surprised, but not gratified, to find that it contained all the jewels of value Miss Beauclerc possessed; but she remonstrated in vain upon the subject.

The portrait of her father excited a variety of mixed sensations, accompanied by curiosity and interest to learn his adventures and misfortunes, the more teasing, as she had

once had it in her power to gratify them ; and Mr. Mordaunt not only refused to impart any circumstance at present, to revive unpleasant recollections, but enjoined Rosella, as she valued the peace of mind of her mother, not to mention the subject to her.

The marriage of Lady Lucy had been publicly announced the fourth day from their meeting ; and the peculiar fretful turn of Mrs. Methwald's temper and habits heightened her wishes for the moment when her amiable friend could, with propriety and convenience, perform her generous promise of claiming her as a visitant ; for it was rather extraordinary that the good lady, notwithstanding her apophthegms on decorum and the wonderful effects of a proper education, actually appeared inconsolable that her daughter, the most peerless of sensible and accomplished women, should lose a dangler by the trumpery attractions of an absurd girl, who conducted herself entirely without method, who never made incomprehensible extracts from

incom-

incomprehensible authors, never studied the high-sounding ebullitions of a crack-brained writer to improve her language, or looked into Voltaire or Rousseau to improve her morality.

At this moment however, unpleasant as were the consequences of Mr. Lesley's assiduity to Rosella, as both Mrs. Methwald and her daughter had particular reasons not to offend Mr. Mordaunt by openly affronting his ward, their resentment was confined to trifling subjects, from which uncomfortably as she could not but feel affected by it, she had no apparent reason to complain.

Rosella was thus situated, when one morning Mrs. Methwald received a billet from Miss Venables, with whom she constantly kept up an intercourse of note-writing, independent of very assiduous visitings on either side; but this billet was of so much more importance than usual, that the good

lady was agitated from head to foot on reading it; and having, very much against the inclinations of Rosella, sent her to dine with Mrs. Creffy, that she might not be placed in the indecorous predicament of sitting at a table where the mistress of it was absent, she threw herself into her carriage, and was taken to her friend's house, where she had previously declared she should spend the day.

At Mrs. Creffy's Rosella learned the occasion of this commotion; for there the master of the house, whose motions were not always regulated by profound wisdom, deferred an excursion he was making, and flew home, when he had already rode several miles, to spread the news of Lord Clanallan's death, which happened the day before.

Rosella was much affected by this intelligence.—Oberne, the generous Oberne, would now no longer be compelled to quit his country, to seek a precarious existence in
another;

another; he was now at liberty to claim her hand, and the most rigid guardian could not withhold his consent: but would he still be the same Oberne, who fought her society under the disadvantages with which she had first appeared to him—who, when others contemned and insulted, justified and defended her?

Mrs. Cressy, who adopted what she called easy manners when her own convenience was in question, had dined *tête-à-tête* with her guest, and amused her by requiring her assistance to alter her head-dress for the evening, when she really had, or pretended she had an indispensable engagement; and then desiring Rosella to make use of her books and music as she thought proper, or, if she chose to return home, to take a servant to attend her, she smiled, curtsied, and stepped to her carriage.

Rosella, knowing that Mr. Cressy was not expected to return till the next day, sat in-

dulging, in listless inactivity, the reveries that stole upon her till the twilight came on: the stillness of the evening, and a few reflections upon the rude neglect of Mrs. Methwald and her daughter, which would intrude amidst others more welcome, had given them a tinge of melancholy.

“There is but one being,” thought she, “of whose affection I can be so far assured that at this moment I may venture to believe she reciprocally thinks of me; and from her I am separated by the effect of that very sensibility she indulges!—Excepting her, there is no one to whom I should dare to confide my sentiments but the amiable Lady Lucy Delamere!—Ah! when, when shall I be relieved from the miseries of forced civility, half-stifled malice, studied flights, and a restrained intercourse with all around me?”

The opening of the door interrupted her soliloquy, and she was at once surprised and discon-

disconcerted to see Mr. Cressy walk into the room.

"My charming Rosella," exclaimed he, "you perceive that I have abridged my absence in the successful hope of finding you here at my return."

"Sir!" said Rosella, with a look not sufficiently grateful perhaps for the condescension thus announced.

"Nay," he resumed, "don't affect the dignity of the old school—those expressive eyes have not been so encouragingly cast down at my constant approach, without a cause. My dear child, you either guessed that I admired you, or wished that I should: and faith, whether it was the one or the other, you displayed some judgment in the intimation!"

This vanity and assurance almost silenced Rosella, who was tormented by an apprehension that she might undesignedly have authorized such an opinion; scarcely know-

ing what she meant to say, she was going to mention the permission Mrs. Creffy had given her, to be attended home by one of her servants ; but when she uttered the lady's name, he interrupted her by repeating it with a horrible grimace.

“ Mrs. Creffy !” exclaimed he : “ a woman with a countenance, both as to form and expression, the exact resemblance of a demure tabby-cat blinking in a window !— In the name of propriety and decorum, let her mow where she pleases ; but never let me be tormented either with her velvet paws or her uncasef nails !”

“ These are not proper sentiments, Sir,” returned Rosella, “ for me to listen to ; the friendship of Mrs. Creffy——”

“ Her friendship !” retorted he, bursting into a fit of laughter : “ you jest, my dear Miss Montresor—it is her pride and boast that she never was weak enough to profess or entertain a friendship for any woman.

“ She

"She speaks and acts ('tis said) just as she ought;

"But never, never reach'd one gen'rous thought—

"So very reasonable, so unmov'd,

"As never yet to love, or be belov'd!"

"I have little interest, Sir," said Rosella, impatiently, "and I find still less satisfaction in this discussion. The character of Mrs. Creffy——"

"You are right," interrupted he, "her's is a character that cannot excite the one, or be productive of the other; let us dismiss the subject for a more pleasant one."

Rosella, without replying, rose from her seat, and rung the bell; and Mr. Creffy then endeavoring to recollect himself, assumed a disengaged air, whilst he reproached her prudery, and laughed at her ignorance of the fashionable conversation of young gentlemen, married and unmarried; and her want of practice of that excess of complaisance and good-nature, with which the soft-mannered Misses of Ton were wont to listen to

it. However, as importunity was a thing he abhorred to employ with others, or be tormented with himself, he readily acceded to her wish of returning home; and having, with his accustomed versatility, very strenuously recommended to her to receive the overtures of his friend Lesley with more indulgence than she had hitherto displayed, he ordered a servant to attend her, whilst he strolled to Brookes's, to see who had dropped in there.

As Rosella stopped at Mr. Mordaunt's door, Lesley walked up to it, and congratulating himself upon this fortunate *rencontre*, accompanied her into the house.

Mrs. Mathward was not returned, and the drawing-room was empty; whither old Philip followed the lights, and delivered to Rosella a letter, which she had a strong presentiment was from Oberne. The presence of Mr. Lesley was now doubly irksome to her; she ardently longed to break the seal,
hurry

hurry over the contents, and know her future destiny ; nor did she at that moment recollect how impossible it was that Oberne should have chosen a time so improper for the subject she surmised.

Mr. Lesley, disregarding her absence of mind, her evident discomposure, and those unfavorable symptoms which might have intimidated a less determined lover, supplicated to be heard with indulgence whilst he explained a circumstance that much occupied him.

Rosella made no reply ; indeed she was very earnestly ruminating upon the probable contents of the epistle she had carefully conveyed into her pocket.

“ My dear Miss Montrefor,” resumed Lesley, “ I understand from one of your friends, that the connection between Miss Beauclerc and yourself is not of a nature to be dissolved ; but that the prudence of your
6 guardians

guardians has prevailed that the secret may remain one."

The attention of Rosella was completely arrested by this prelude.

"Permit me to enquire," said she, "to which of the few friends I boast, you are indebted for this intelligence?"

"Perhaps," returned the gentleman, "you already guess: I will inform you, however, that I heard it from the prim lips of that most insupportable of all women, Mrs. Creffy. Yet do not imagine that the communication, unpleasant as I confess it was, has in the smallest degree altered my sentiments;—you are sufficiently amiable to maintain an influence with me, too powerful to be shaken by an incident, which indeed displays your circumspection in a situation of so much difficulty as the one in which I first saw you. I have only further to say upon this subject," added he, "that I much applaud the measures Mr. Mordaunt has taken,

taken, which remove every obstacle to an alliance I earnestly wish, and to which I will flatter myself my charming Miss Montresor is not averse."

Rosella, equally mortified and incensed, was for a moment silent.

"I know not," said she at length, "why Mrs. Creffy should take the trouble to descant upon a circumstance which she acknowledges her uncle wishes to be untalked of!—I must profess myself, however, obliged to you for your favorable opinion of me; but I will, at the same time, observe, that no person shall, directly or indirectly, dictate to me the terms on which I ought to live with Miss Beauclerc, but Miss Beauclerc herself, whose pleasure it is that I act as I do: and if at this moment she were to inform me that she had altered her plan, I would subscribe to her wishes, not only with cheerfulness, but with real satisfaction."

"I

“ I admire your principles and your sentiments,” replied Mr. Lesley, changing his tone; “ and I hope to conciliate——”

“ Pardon me,” interrupted she, with earnestness, “ if I say that what I have declared is merely with a view to place my conduct in a proper light, before a person who professes himself acquainted with the motives that govern it; the alliance you condescend to speak of may therefore still have with you the obstacle you supposed to have been wholly removed, and with me it has others, which I may not be anxious to remove.”

“ You are offended,” said Mr. Lesley, “ and apparently with justice; but Mr. Mordaunt, perhaps——”

“ I feel no displeasure, Sir,” replied Rosella more coolly, “ on the contrary, I profess myself indebted to you for the example you have set me of avowing my sentiments with freedom.”

She

She then withdrew, leaving the gentleman in a conflict of pride, mortification, anger, and involuntary admiration, vowing a mortal hatred to the first of women, Mrs. Cressy, who had, by her mischievous prattle and insinuations, involved him in this disgrace.

Rosella, meantime, flew to her own apartment to examine the contents of her letter, and was rather shocked at the formality of the address, which consisted of the solitary word

“MADAM!

“I have,” it continued, “already directed an apology to Mr. Mordaunt for having failed to profit by the appointment with which he honored me on Tuesday; but as you may perhaps recollect that my visit was originally intended to you—I believe, at least I hope, you will not think me officious, if I repeat

repeat the substance of what I wrote to your friend.

“ A sudden and indispenfible request from Lord Clanallan, who is alarmingly ill, and wished to fee me again almost immediately after I had quitted him on Tuesday, prevented my attendance in —— street; and the most perplexing and urgent business has hitherto prevented the personal explanation I was anxious to give; which, from intelligence I this morning heard, I have reason to think you would find very little interest in listening to: yet I cannot, by remaining entirely silent, suffer an imputation of negligence and impertinence, I have not deserved.

“ I have the honor to be, &c.

“ ARTHUR OBERNE.”

Rosella, stupified by chagrin and disappointment, continued gazing at the letter some time after she had read it, and did not observe for many minutes that it was dated a week

week back ; a circumstance that confirmed her vexation. It required no answer, and it was impossible she could have replied to it with propriety ; but not to have received it before the suspicions it betrayed must be cruelly confirmed, was, she thought, extremely teasing and provoking.—And now might not he imagine, should he be undeceived as to her indifference to himself, or any engagement he supposed her to be under to another, that the change in his situation had operated to alter her sentiments ?

Her dolorous reflections were at length interrupted by the return of Mrs. Methwald ; and she was compelled to attend at supper with very little inclination to partake of it.

Rosella, in her correspondence with her mother, which was regular and uninterrupted, had never mentioned Oberne, both in the fear of reviving unpleasant recollections, and that she might not engage her anew in
what

what might have been called romantic ideas ; but this silence she felt to be a great act of self-denial, and she was more than once strongly tempted to break it in her subsequent visits to Avelines, which were attended with more composure, and less productive of unpleasant consequences than the first, as Mrs. Methwald condescended to allow her the use of her brother's carriage, until Miss Beauclerc had accommodated herself with a new one, which was principally intended for the service of Rosella.

And to complete her inquietude, Mr. Mordaunt having arranged some affairs which had hitherto detained him in town, announced his intention of removing his family, for two or three months, to his country-seat, which was a considerable distance from the residence of Miss Beauclerc, and must necessarily prevent the personal intercourse now become her principal consolation.

Rosella

Rosella had heard that Lord Clanallan, or as she preferred calling him, Oberne, had travelled to Ireland, and she could not therefore expect to see him even if she had remained in London; but she understood, from the communication of Mrs. Cressy to her mother, that Lady Lucy Delamere would pass a few days in the metropolis in a fortnight, in her way to Bognor Rocks, where her brother's family *rendezvoused* for the autumn.

This intelligence rendered the notification of Mr. Mordaunt's intention extremely painful to her; as she feared, by losing an opportunity of seeing Lady Lucy, to lose also a place—insignificant as the conduct of Mrs. Methwald and her daughter made her apprehend herself to be—in the memory of one so surrounded by friends, so courted by happiness, so engaged in the enjoyment of the present, so flattered by the prospects of the future.

The

The day before the journey, Mr. Mor-daunt took Rosella apart, and after some preliminary, enquired what misunderstanding prevailed between Mr. Lesley and herself; and with a little hesitation she informed him of the last conversation that she had had with him: nor did her old friend disapprove her conduct; and she perceived that he was much offended by the officious interference of his niece, though he was rather taciturn on the subject.

To Rosella he continued as usual, kind and attentive; but he retained several days towards Mrs. Cressy, who accompanied the party, a gravity of aspect she vainly endeavored to soften by constant appeals to his sentiments, and submitting her own most favorite maxims voluntarily to his corrections.

He could not but perceive the inhospitable coldness of his sister, and he likewise discerned that it was felt by Rosella; but he
knew

knew of no other place to remove her to, which would carry with it the same title to respect as a residence in his house afforded her; and he pretended to be blind to the evil he could not remedy, hoping the good sense of his ward would enable her to conceal her disgust.

Rosella did indeed conquer it so far as to forbear complaint; but every time Mrs. Methwald indulged the peevishness of her querulous temper, she feared that her visit was too much lengthened; and every time she declined her conversation in favor of her pen or a book, or withdrew the whole morning to sit in Mrs. Cressy's dressing-room, where her young guest never had the honor of being admitted, Rosella fancied that it was an intimation not to be mistaken, that, according to the good lady's own words, she was ready to fly to the extremity of the globe to be rid of her.

Mrs. Creffy was however, when they met, extremely civil ; indeed she was pleased with the effect she supposed her communication had taken on Mr. Lesley, as she attributed the coldness she could not fail to have observed between Rosella and him, to the discovery she had purposely made ; and she could now afford to throw away a little *politesse* upon her favored rival, without much outraging her feelings.

The spirits of Rosella sunk under the contemplation of the many cheerless moments she had yet to pass in this manner ; and she began to lose that elasticity of mind, self-love and self-respect inspire, and to suspect that she must herself possess a most unsocial and repulsive disposition, since all the inmates it had been her destiny to know, were equally unpleasing to her, Mr. Mordaunt and her mother excepted.

Her only amusement consisted in solitary walks in the grounds, or in attending her
kind

kind old friend to his farm, of which he was very fond. Mrs. Methwald and her daughter were too refined to relish the commonplace conversation of the principal part of their neighbours ; that is, every family not recommended by some degree of rank or fashion : and unfortunately those with whom they were forward to associate, were in turn equally reserved ; so that it was always the same family party, without variation, and without internal amusement ; but extremely philosophical, regular, learned, quiet, and well-bred. It was indeed a most excellent household for a lethargic valetudinarian ; but Rosella, who was neither of a sickly or sleepy habit, would have given all her worldly goods to have stepped out of this apoplectic paradise, and have peeped into the world she had quitted, to discover how the titled Oberne was filling up his time : if he was with eager haste, running over the same course in which he had twice before distanced reason and prudence, or whether abjuring the

errors of his youth, he staid the impetuous ebullitions of a mind, where

“ Reformation comes in a flood,

“ With a strong heady current, scow’ring faults.”

Nor did she wish in vain : she had received a letter from Miss Beauclerc, informing her that their kind and mutual friend had so adjusted her affairs, that the trifling offering she wished to make to her Rosella of her own personal fortune, he had enabled her to do—an intelligence that communicated no additional satisfaction to her disinterested daughter, excepting when she reflected that it would render her portion more worthy the acceptance of Lord Clannallan, if indeed he had not forgotten her in the pleasant prospects he now contemplated.

As Rosella had no other correspondent than Miss Beauclerc, she felt no interest in the packet of letters laid upon the breakfast-table

table the following morning ; but Mrs. Methwald having rather earnestly regarded the superscription of one of them, put it across the table, repeating in a tone of surprise—

“ For Miss Montrefor ! ”

Rosella, according to the usage established by Mr. Mordaunt, immediately satisfied a very importunate curiosity by tearing it open.

“ It is from Lady Lucy Delamere, Sir,” said she, her eyes sparkling with delight ; and she put the letter into the hands of her old friend, whilst the ladies exchanged looks of astonishment and displeasure.

“ This invitation is both pleasant and honorable,” returned he, “ and must be attended to instantly.”

With the permission of Rosella, he then passed the letter to Mrs. Methwald; who read it over in some agitation; and her daughter congratulated Rosella with a smile, upon receiving so charming a proof of the consideration of one of the most elegant and accomplished women in England.

Mr. Mordaunt had now taken up his own packet, and observing the writing of Lady Lucy addressed to him, immediately gave it the preference.

“ Oh ho ! here is a sop to Cerberus ! ” exclaimed the good man : “ this Syren promises to love me dearly, if I will prevail with my sister to part with Miss Montrefor for a month or two ; a request, she says, she feels the less difficulty in making, because she understands that Mrs. Cressy is now with her mother.”

A most gracious assent was instantly given, to the infinite delight of the anxious Rosella ;
and

and according to the arrangement between Lady Lucy and Mr. Mordaunt, on the third day following she left Mrs. Methwald and her simpering daughter to astronomize, botanize, and philosophize at their leisure, whilst she proceeded towards London in the carriage of her kind old friend, accompanied by Nancy, and was met by that of Lady Lucy at an appointed place, which conducted her to the town-house of Lord Morteyne, occupied for the present moment by his sister.

CHAP. X.

A touch of heroics—and a final adjustment.

“**H**ERE she is!” cried Lady Lucy, in an accent of pleasure, flying at the same time to meet her guest with the most enchanting suavity.

“Here she is!” echoed her husband, taking the hand of Rosella; her other hand was at the same moment seized—she turned to see by whom, and beheld—

“Mr. Oberne!” exclaimed she.

“No, not Oberne,” said Lady Lucy, smiling, and leading her to a seat.

“I mean—I should have said—” hesitated she.

“You

“ You have said right,” interrupted Lord Clanallan, “ I am the same Oberne who have so often proved your patience and good humour ; and with you I will know no other appellation.”

Lady Lucy observing that Rosella was painfully confused, called him to order, and then enquired how she had left the good people at home.

“ That is a question of course,” said Mr. Delamere ; “ don’t answer it, my dear Miss Montresor, but rather tell us how you think Clanallan——”

“ As you cannot behave better,” interrupted Lady Lucy, “ I shall run away with my little friend ; and we will sit and prose together in my dressing-room till you both cry *peccavi*.”

And then, in spite of promise or entreaty, she took the hand of Rosella, and withdrew with her.

When they were quietly seated *tête-à-tête*—

“ You are surprised, my dear Miss Montrefor,” said the amiable young woman, “ to find Lord Clanallan with us ; but I hope you are not much displeased with me for the little embarrassment his unexpected presence has given you.”

“ It is impossible,” replied Rosella earnestly, “ that I can feel displeasure even in your Ladyship’s presence, much less can I be displeased at any action of your’s.”

“ This latitude you so obligingly allow me,” returned Lady Lucy with a smile, “ is a good presage for my friend Oberne ! I have not, however, taken you out of the hands of the Philistines to torment you myself ; so I will restrain my flippant tongue, and inform you by what means you find him on your arrival, so comfortably established here :—

“ When he returned from Ireland, he met by accident Lord Morteyne, and enquired

quired when the world might congratulate Lesley upon his marriage : it happened that my brother knew so little at that moment of the intentions and arrangements of your rejected lover, that his answer did not entirely dispel those doubts our friend had formed from the officious communication of that gossip-loving Cressy ; and when he learned that Mr. Delamere and myself were expected in town, he very impatiently awaited our arrival to be assured of the truth. We had been already assailed by the lamentations of poor Lesley, who execrates his own folly in not guarding against the machinations of his prim tormenter Mrs. Cressy ; for, with more address than I thought her capable of, she contrived to make him the channel to communicate to you some trifling family objections raised against his suit. Mr. Delamere was therefore empowered to end the uneasy suspense of Lord Clanallan ; and as we all abhorred the idea of your remaining in Mr. Mordaunt's enchanted castle, guarded by two such mountain-cats as Mrs. Methwald

and her daughter, I resolved to claim the performance of the silent promise I flattered myself you gave me, to favor me with a visit. And from that time Lord Clanallan was not to be driven from the door, 'from ~~the~~ ^{the} morn dewy eve,' in the fear of missing the happiness of seeing you the first moment of your arrival."

Lady Lucy was now interrupted by a message, importing that her society, and that of her fair friend, was most impatiently wished for in the drawing-room, whither she thought proper to descend.

Lord Clanallan gave a loose to his natural vivacity, Mr. Delamere seconded his cheerfulness, and his charming wife was full of those nameless attentions, those fascinating net-works that draw round the gentler affections, proceeding from a combination of polished suavity, good sense, and good humour—a charm the cold-hearted Mrs. Cressy aimed at in vain, and which, in the high-

high-birther seductress, degenerates into blandishment.

Rosella felt her own gaiety revive ; but it revived like the slow return of health to the feeble, sensibly but not perceptibly. Her heart swam in soft contentment ; and she spoke from time to time, to assure herself that she was not sleeping in the next apartment to Mrs. Methwald, and dreaming of happiness she was not destined to know.

In consideration of the fatigue she had endured from her journey, Lord Clanallan was persuaded to depart before midnight, with an invitation to breakfast the next morning.

When he was gone, Mr. Delamere approached Rosella.

“ Lady Lucy,” said he, “ has, I find, stolen a march upon me, and received for-
n 6 giveness

giveness for an error, of which I was still more guilty——”

“ Let me entreat,” interrupted Rosella, “ that you will not renew——”

“ I will not,” returned he ; “ only permit me to say, that the paper you addressed to me at Eideva Lodge, I found there on my return from Scotland ; and I should have acknowledged the receipt of it sooner, but that I was ashamed to address you when I discovered the extent of my fault.—Indeed I——”

“ Now you have said quite enough,” exclaimed Lady Lucy : “ have the goodness to learn the exact point at which an apology should terminate—it requires at least as much judgment as to roast a pheasant ; and Monsieur Fervise will tell you that a turn too much *l’envoie au diable !*”

This fully removed the confusion of Rosella, and they parted for the night with mutual good-humour and complacency.

The

The next day, Lord Clanallan was more than usually matinal ; and Rosella was not quite dressed when she heard a double rap at the street-door, which she concluded was his. She would not however venture to peep from the window ; but Nancy, whose spirits were much elevated since she had escaped from the dominion of Mrs. Methwald, felt no scruple on the subject, so she hastily put aside the blind, and thrusting her head out at the open sash, exclaimed—

“ If here isn’t the new Lord Mr. Oberne, God bless him !—coomed already !—And a leuks as merry as a grig, for all his black coat !”

In two minutes Lady Lucy’s maid came, with an entreaty that Miss Montrefor would be so obliging to tell Lord Clanallan that she would descend to the breakfast-room in ten minutes : and if his Lordship chose to have any tea or chocolate in the interim, perhaps Miss Montrefor would have the
goodness

goodness to preside at the table till Lady Lucy appeared.

Rosella, who perfectly understood the meaning of this embassy, complied with the request, and entered the apartment where Lord Clanallan awaited her, in a trepidation she could not but observe.

“ Ah ! I see,” cried he, “ that I must thank my little friend, Lady Lucy, for this indulgence, which I should not have obtained at Mrs. Methwald’s for six months, I suppose.—Encouraged and supported as I am,” continued he, “ by Lady Lucy’s good wishes, and her promised good offices, I will hope, dear Rosella, that you still remember poor Oberne with a small degree of complacency : but may I hope too that you will forget his confessed faults and follies, and permit him to apply for a second audience of the grave and prudent Mr. Mordaunt ?—whose former appointment I confess I looked forward to with some dread, ill-prepared as I

was

was to answer stunning questions about rent-rolls and unmortgaged lands !”

Rosella was rather relieved, as he intended she should be, by this gaiety of style, and congratulated him with a smile, that his proposed emigration was now of necessity deferred a few years longer.

“ Ah Rosella !” said he, “ I believed that the period of indispensable banishment had overtaken me when I unexpectedly saw you in Charles-street. I thought you refused to return my salutation ; and I then felt all the misery of poverty, and the contempt it too often carries with it.”

“ You mentioned that circumstance when last I saw you,” replied Rosella, much hurt that he should again recur to it ; “ did you not believe my justification ?”

“ I tell you why I repeat it,” said he : “ that you may be assured, from judging of the pain I endured at that moment, that I will never again plunge myself into a situation,

where my conscience may remind me, that at best I deserve the cruel pity of those whose esteem I covet."

She was silent ; but a tear dropped from her eye, and he interpreted it as he wished.

" And now, my amiable Rosella," resumed he, " tell me, have I your consent to pay my compliments to your good old friend Mr. Mordaunt ?"

Rosella suddenly recollected that there was another person to whom he ought likewise to apply ; and all that Mr. Lesley had said upon the subject instantly recurred to her.

" Mr. Mordaunt, my Lord," said she, withdrawing from him the hand he held, with a change of countenance sufficiently visible, " is not the only one to whom I ought to account for my conduct ; perhaps you do not know——"

" Yes,

“ Yes, yes,” interrupted he hastily, “ I know all ; and I can never forget that I am indebted to a certain dear friend of our’s, for a prospect of the happiness I hope to receive her consent in obtaining.”

Rosella felt a weight removed from her heart by this reply : the smile, which apprehension had driven from her lips, stole back again, and Lord Clanallan had little difficulty in persuading her to give him an explicit permission to apply both to Miss Beauclerc and Mr. Mordaunt.

He reprobated, with the generous ardor natural to his character, the idea of disavowing a mother for errors she had abjured, and encouraged Rosella to prove by her conduct the independence of her principles.

“ Will you then,” exclaimed she, “ endeavor to persuade Miss Beauclerc to assume the name and character most properly her’s,
and

and add this more important obligation to those I already owe you?"

He was replying with much tenderness when Lady Lucy peeped into the room.

"Have you left me any breakfast?" said she, advancing: "bless me, my dear Miss Montresor," she added, on observing the *déjeuné* apparatus in its original order, "what an Egyptian task you have had!—I fear you will never excuse me for imposing it on your good-nature!"

Rosella blushed.

"I give you notice, good people," resumed Lady Lucy, "that when my own breakfast is ended, I shall drive to Hampton-wick, to see if my brother's house is tenantable; for he has lent it to Mr. Delamere for two or three months. So if you have any inclination to accompany me, I shall be thankful,

ful, because I shall be able to find very ample employment for you."

Rosella looked her gratitude for this intimation, which she translated very justly into a wish of paying a delicate attention to Miss Beauclerc, and gratifying the feelings both of mother and daughter; and Lord Clanallan put the hand of their amiable friend to his lips, with a glance equally expressive.

Mr. Delamere almost immediately appeared, and the conversation became general. He was prevented from attending the party by having business to transact in town; and the two ladies, accompanied by Lord Clanallan, left him with a promise of returning to dinner.

When they arrived at Hampton-wick, Lady Lucy, embracing Rosella, told her that she would spare her for an hour or two; but that she would detain their mad companion

panion as long as she could prevail upon him to attend to her injunctions.

“ Perhaps,” added she, in a more timid accent, “ Miss Beauclerc will indulge me with an opportunity of paying my compliments to her in person ;—at all events I will do myself the honor of sending my ticket.”

Rosella returned the embrace with sincere affection ; but unable to reply, she left her in silence, and was conveyed in five minutes to the arms of her mother, who was not long unacquainted with the pleasurable change in her situation. The particular attachment of Lord Clanallan was the last intelligence that met her ear, but it was far from being the least satisfactory.

“ Thank Heaven !” exclaimed the anxious mother, “ my follies have not permanently injured your happiness !—Oberne, my dear Rosella, has too much good-nature and generosity to reproach you in future with those impru-

imprudences to which you were yourself the victim ; and if, as you inform me, he has bought experience and worldly wisdom from past lapses of discretion, you have every prospect of passing your days with as little vexation as a human being has reason to hope. And never, my dear child, diminish your comforts by an expectation of uninterrupted felicity surpassing the lot of mortality !—Perfect happiness, or happiness approaching perfection, is, I am now convinced, to be found only in fiction and romance.—Here is Lord Clanallan crossing the lawn !—Oh Rosella, can I forget what has happened since last I beheld him !—but I will think only of the future.”

His entrance prevented the reply of her blushing child, and his assiduous respect to herself, his evident affection for Rosella, soon banished unpleasant recollections. She assured him of her entire approbation of his proposals, and that she derived, from the prospect of his union with her daughter,

much future satisfaction to herself in the contemplation of their happiness.

Lord Clanallan had been rather shocked by the alteration still visible in the person of Miss Beauclerc; but he felt a secret gratification in observing the sedateness of her countenance, and the composed gravity of her conversation.

At length Rosella recollected the condescending message of Lady Lucy, and repeated it to her mother.

“Amiable woman!” returned she; “I ought on every account to call first upon her; but if she will have the goodness to wave ceremony in my favor, I confess I shall be pleased to avoid quitting my own inclosure, which at present I do not wish to pass.”

Lord Clanallan undertook to inform Lady Lucy of her sentiments; and in half an hour he returned with her.

Miss

Miss Beauclerc received this advance with the acknowledgments it merited; and it was late when Lady Lucy reminded Rosella of the promise she had made to Mr. Delamere, of bringing back her guests to dinner. She mentioned however, that in two days she meant to return to the neighbourhood of Avelines to pass some time, and then she would hope that no circumstance could happen to prevent a lasting intercourse between the two families.

Lord Clanallan, eager to secure the approbation of Mr. Mordaunt, would not defer his application beyond the following day; and the good old man, perfectly satisfied with the statement of his *rent-rolls* and *unmortgaged lands*, and reflecting that the proposed union would completely efface every slanderous impression the former attendance of Lord Clanallan had occasioned, readily consented to the proposition; but he advised that every idea of acknowledging the very near affinity of Rosella and her friend
at

at Avelines, by disclosing her history, should be given up.

“ It is nonsense to suppose,” said he, “ that people will not comment upon such romantic proceedings, according to the fashion of their own opinions ; and in proportion as malice, envy, and ill-humour prevail, in the same degree will acrimonious sarcasms be levelled at your peace, which, though you may affect to despise, will be unpleasant drawbacks to domestic felicity. So take the advice of an old man, and respect the prejudices of the world, whose atmosphere you condescend to breathe !—Believe me, it is only in a sentimental novel where fair ladies can Oh yes ! all their perils, their follies, hair-breadth escapes, imprudences, and shipwrecks ; and expect, at the winding-up of the catastrophe, to sail through the remainder of their lives so very smoothly and pleasantly, without one little breeze to whisper a remembrancer of past oblique adventures !”

Lord

Lord Clanallan smiled, and observed that it was not his province to endeavor to influence Miss Beaucherc by an indirect objection to any plan she chose to adopt ; nor did he wish to oppose any determination she might ultimately form, for whatever it were, the sentiments he had avowed would remain unalterable ; and he merely meant to intimate, that her own happiness and that of Rosella were with him the only consideration.

Mr. Mordaunt desired him to leave this point to his discretion ; and he wrote immediately to Miss Beaucherc, to strengthen her opinion of the efficacy of her self-denial.

Mrs. Methwald and her peerless daughter received a shock by the intelligence of the approaching marriage of Rosella, which required all their fortitude, and self-command, and imaginary suavity of deportment to endure with decent composure ; for the circumstance was a strong libel upon their judgment

and discernment, which had led them to predict that Rosella would remain the insignificant, unnoticed, mysterious little personage they would fain have thought her; and they now foresaw that they must toil hard in the trammels of forced civility and repulsed attentions, before they could induce the future Lady Clanallan wholly to forget the time, when neither maxim nor philosophy could make them overlook her offensive youth and beauty, and discover her claims to kindness.

Miss Beauclerc, whose sobered sentiments agreed with those of Mr. Mordaunt, insisted that her secret history should be confined to those who were already acquainted with it; at least she would not, by her own avowal, license the familiar comments of careless and indifferent associates, who spread, either with a malicious design, or no design at all, reports which wound the shrinking bosom of affection, and jar those interests which should never be disunited.

Whilst

Whilst Rosella could occasionally enjoy her society, that of Lady Lucy, and Delamere, and was constantly attended by Lord Clanallan with assiduous attachment, she submitted with cheerfulness to the decision; nor did she repine, as he was apt to do, at the precise and tedious arrangements of Mr. Mordaunt, and count the weeks of his first mourning with impatience; but she felt hurt, when she discovered that Miss Venables threatened an endless resentment to her amiable niece, for having assisted the pretensions of her young rival, and vowed that she should never possess a guinea of her fortune. But Lady Lucy laughed at her threats, and declared that she had acted the part of a dutiful relation in preventing her from marrying an Irish fortune-hunter; for so, in the fury of her disgrace and disappointment, the good lady had openly denominated her once favored Oberne. She could not prevail upon herself to practise the philosophy her friend Mrs. Methwald preached; but highly incensed with her as with

every one else, she espoused a French Marquis, who offered to engage in her service as an *aide-de cuisine*.

Rosella had been about six weeks in the protection of Lady Lucy, when one morning she was called from her dressing-room by the arrival of a gentlewoman, who would not send up her name, but desired to speak to Miss Montresor immediately. In some trepidation she descended to the apartment into which this mysterious personage had been ushered, and beheld the well-remembered face of Mrs. Ellinger.

Rosella checked the surprise this unexpected visit occasioned, and advanced to her old acquaintance with a smiling countenance and an extended hand, which the lady, to her extreme consternation, seized with an heroic air, and throwing herself on her knees, kissed it with great emphasis of action, and wiped her eyes.

“ I

“ I am pleased to see you in good health, Madam,” said Rosella, after some hesitation ; “ may I enquire if you have seen Miss Beauclerc this morning ? ”

“ No, much-injured girl ! ” replied the *ci-devant* heroine, with a forced agitation of features ; “ that lady and I meet no more ; but you, whom her conduct and caprices have injured—you who are undone by her criminal concealments—you who are still ignorant to whom you are indebted for life—”

Rosella trembled.

“ You interest and affect my heart !— Know then that this bosom possesses a secret—a secret to blast all your happiness, should it meet the ear of your lover ! ”

“ Then, Madam,” interrupted Rosella, with spirit, “ I am convinced it ought to meet his ear ;—if your assertion is just, my happiness is already blasted ; for I practise no reserve with—with my friends. And as I imagine you have been so obliging to call

upon me to communicate this tremendous secret, I shall be really thankful if you will end my suspense. Impatient however as I feel to learn it, I must first assure you that no circumstance can for a moment tempt me to suspect Miss Beauclerc of an intention to injure me, or any human being ;—if she has had concealments, they are not criminal ones !”

“ I would have you prepare,” resumed Mrs. Ellinger, pressing her hand upon her heart, as if to still its emotions, “ for a discovery I am sorry it is my lot to impart to you, ever beloved Rosella ;—know then, that you are—oh Heaven !—the daughter of—Miss Beauclerc !”

“ Is this *all* you would tell me ?” asked Rosella.

“ God of the universe !” exclaimed the poor lady, “ what have I done ?—Oh child of my dearest hopes, give way to your distraction, tear your hair, rend your bosom—any thing but this calm settled despair !”

“ I

“ I am sorry I cannot comply with every request of your’s, Mrs. Ellinger,” said Rosella, with great gravity ; “ but as I am not really in a despairing mood, I have little inclination to act such a tragedy.—I am concerned that you have had so much trouble in seeking me out, merely to mention a circumstance I was well acquainted with.”

Mrs. Ellinger gazed at her with an expression of countenance so ludicrously woe-ful, that Rosella could not forbear smiling.

“Acquainted with it!” exclaimed she;
“my God! no *denouement*—no catastrophe!”

“ No, my dear Madam,” replied Rosella with some gaiety ; “ Lord Clanallan and myself thought it would be more novel to omit the usual ceremony of gathering together all the *dramatis personæ*, to rip up budgets of old stories, and—man, woman, child, master, mistress, domestics, tenants, vagrants, friends, relations, and spectators—all cry,

O 4

laugh,

laugh, relate, be facetious and sentimental in the *finale* chorus !”

Mrs. Ellinger, disconcerted by the failure of her sublime scheme, and thus attacked on a favorite subject, was disposed to be heroic ; but Rosella stopped the torrent just in time, by a gentle reprimand for her injustice and ingratitude to Miss Beauclerc, who had ever treated her with attention and friendship.

“ I cannot however forget,” continued she, “ that Mrs. Ellinger, as the wife of my guardian, deported herself with much kindness towards me in my childhood.”

The lady, extremely softened by this acknowledgment, recollected that it would be very desirable to preserve the favor of Lady Clanallan, whose countenance would give her a part of the consequence she had lost by quitting the roof of her husband ; she therefore received the intimation with gratitude, and
having

having declined the vulgarity of accepting refreshment, took her leave, saying she would write to Miss Beauclerc, whose affection she feared to have much diminished by the unjust accusations with which she had loaded her in a former letter ; a circumstance that had never reached the knowledge of Rosella, who adopted in this instance the same prudent concealment, and by forbearing to mention the present folly of Mrs. Ellinger, avoided a retrospection of the influence she had unfortunately possessed over the actions of Miss Beauclerc at a former period ; and the visit did not even reach the knowledge of Lady Lucy.

This amiable young woman displayed each day a more confirmed attachment to her fair guest, as each day unfolded to her observation the characteristic virtues and graces of Rosella ; but at length they were compelled to separate, for Mrs. Methwald claimed the privilege of directing her brother's

ther's ward in the envied task of exchanging five hundred pounds for clothes and ornaments—a task Rosella left almost wholly to her, to procure peace and good-will when, for a short time, she again returned to the house of her good old friend. And whilst Mrs. Methwald was making daily perambulations to enforce the execution of her orders, she flew down to Avelines in her mother's carriage, to pass an hour with her, and another with Lady Lucy; a period generally spent by Lord Clanallan, who *happened* almost constantly to meet her on the road, in lamenting the heavy fetters of ice with which the presence of Mrs. Methwald and her daughter appeared to load the sentiments and manners of Rosella, who pleaded guilty to the charge, and conjured him to retain his patience a little longer.

Lady Lucy laughed at his woeful complaints, and rallied him upon his want of knight-errantry, in suffering his fair *dulcina* to remain

in such a cruel state of enchantment ; but promised at length to use her influence with Mr. Mordaunt to abridge the term of his wintry punishment.

In one of these excursions Rosella unexpectedly encountered Lord and Lady Morteyne, who, in passing through town, had deviated from their road to visit Lady Lucy and her husband. She felt rather confused for the first five minutes ; but the conciliating deportment of Lady Morteyne, who was much hurt at her former injustice, and wished to efface it from the memory of her sister's friend, and the polite attentions of Lord Morteyne, soon restored her to composure, and banished unpleasant recollections of the *fracas* at Guairdy.

Rosella had heard, from common report, that Mr. Eltcourt was perfectly recovered from the effects of his accident, and his brother now informed her that he had very care-

fully concealed how deservedly he had met with it.

“ But,” added he to Lady Lucy, “ that absurd fellow Povey, whom Cyril used to denominate your knight, either designedly or undesignedly, disclosed the secret, and our impetuous brother rewarded his officiousness by knocking him down on the Steine at Brighton; so that the poor little man, who from his original profession has a great abhorrence of breaking the peace, has been compelled to throw up his commission; and, I presume, would be extremely obliged to any kind friend who would employ him to draw up marriage articles, or make a will.”

This important intelligence created little emotion but of laughter; but Rosella was pleased that the affair had terminated so peaceably, as she would have been much grieved to have been again the occasion,
however

however remote, of vexation to Lady Lucy, by endangering the safety of a brother who was beloved by her, in spite of his slender title to her affection.

“ I once received very unmerited thanks,” said Lord Morteyne, “ for a service I was supposed to have exclusively rendered Miss Montrefor ; but I imagine she has long since discovered to whom the acknowledgments were due.”

Rosella, with some emotion, averred that she did not comprehend his meaning ; and learned from the explanation that followed, that Oberne himself was the knight-errant who had rescued her from the danger into which her runaway steed had placed her, when she had so unintentionally joined the chase.

She was much surprised at the intelligence ; and Lord Clanallan at that moment

making his appearance, was questioned upon his long concealment of the circumstance by Lady Lucy.

“ I was unwilling,” replied he, “ upon a further acquaintance with our charming friend, to own that I was the stupid being who could commit her to the care of another, upon the absurd plea I urged to your brother.”

“ And so you suffered him,” resumed Lady Lucy, “ to take the whole credit of the exploit to this hour, rather than confess that having followed the impulse of humanity at the hazard of losing your life, you rejected that of gallantry at the hazard of losing your horse!—I would to Heaven,” added she, “ that the total absence of even politeness and attention, so much to be remarked in the present race of English *petit-mâtres*, could be explained in the same manner.”

Lord

Lord Clanallan smiled at this apostrophe, and having thanked the good-natured Lady Lucy for the *tournaire* she had given to the adventure, changed the subject of conversation.

At length the moment arrived that emancipated Rosella from the dominion of Mrs. Methwald, and rewarded the faithful attachment of Lord Clanallan.

Mr. Mordaunt officiated as her father during the ceremony, and when it was ended, he embraced her with paternal affection.

“ I believe,” said he, “ I have now done my duty as a careful and conscientious guardian : I am happy that I have not had occasion to exert my power by opposing your inclinations, my dear Rosella : and I trust that some years hence, should I live so long, I shall reflect upon this day with as much

much satisfaction as I experience at this moment."

Rosella kissed the hand of her venerable friend in silence ; and taking leave of Lady Lucy with tenderness, and of Mrs. Methwald with polite acknowledgments, she set off with Lord Clanallan for a hunting-seat of his late brother's in Berkshire, taking Avelines in their way ; where they received the fervent benedictions of Miss Beauclerc, who could not be prevailed upon to attend the ceremony, from the fear of betraying a too potent emotion, and affecting the spirits of her beloved Rosella.

To Lord Clanallan she presented all the furniture and appurtenances of her town-house, and the use of it during her life ; and the cottage was purchased by Mr. Delamere.

Some time after the marriage of Rosella, her mother disclosed to her the history of her
own

own imprudent union, and the unhappy catastrophe that ensued ; and in consideration of the former friendship between Mrs. Ellinger and herself, considerably augmented her income, which the displeasure and parsimony of her husband would not allow him to make a very comfortable one.

Mr. Creffy and his Lady continued for some time to live in great apparent cordiality ; but at length, to the unspeakable mortification of Mrs. Methwald, he declared, upon the refusal of her barbarous brother to make up his affairs, that a pale, prim, simpering, philosophical, deistical, botanical, astronomical, sophistical, soft-mannered, flint-hearted automaton was his supreme aversion : and his conduct evinced that an excessive rosy, open-tempered, ill-educated young lady, whose *ci-devant* employment consisted in making butter and cheeses, was not so entirely insupportable.

When

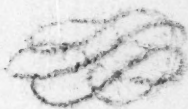
When the dear friends of poor Mrs. Cressy warmly resented this atrocity, in condolence and expressions of wonder and abhorrence, she still smiled in return for their obliging sympathy, retained her box at the Opera, and frequented assemblies as usual, to the admiration of her mother, who wrote a halting sonnet in praise of such fortitude and magnanimity, and sent it to be inserted with other sublime effusions, in the Lady's Magazine.

Miss Beauclerc would have taken Nancy back into her own service, upon the marriage of her young Lady ; but the poor girl had promised herself such felicity and honors in being *fam-de-sham* to a Lord's wife, who is called my Lady all the world over, that Rosella indulged her in her wishes, in consideration of her fidelity and attachment at a moment when they were peculiarly acceptable to her.

The

The self-denial of Lady Clanallan's mother, in refusing herself a claim so dear to the heart of a parent, was rewarded in a few years by the society of a little grand-daughter, whose mind she was indefatigable in properly forming; and it was remarkable that the young lady understood of the words of her own language in general use, almost every one better than those hacknied expressions, *sentiment* and *mystery*.

THE END.



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The materials and texture of this Novel are so superior to those of which this species of writing is in general composed, that we lament extremely having so long neglected to peruse it, and announce its merits to the public. The author, who possesses a sound, discriminating, and improved mind, has drawn his characters, not from the mere suggestions of fancy, as is usual with writers of this class, but from a clear, distinct, and judicious view of their archetypes, as they exist in nature. In conformity to the title of his work, he has represented "*Man as he is*," and seems to have taken Fielding and Le Sage for his models; but he has contrived to render his scenes contributory to the purposes of virtue, morality, and happiness. The story is finely conceived, and the narrative of it so easy and artless, that it assumes the appearance of true history. The character of Sir George Paradyne, the hero of the piece, a rich, gay, generous young man, who acts entirely from the feelings of a sensible and virtuous heart, is as finely contrasted with the character of Mr. Bardoe, a gentleman who is guided only by the dictates of reason and experience; as the character of Miss Carlill, a lively, shrewd, and sensible Quaker, is with that of Cornelia Coleraine, the heroine of the piece, and a perfect model of female softness, delicacy, and good sense. There are other characters of a different complexion, in which the vices of unfeeling ambition, political profligacy, gaming, hypocrisy, and female depravity, are exposed in the misconduct of Lady Mary Paradyne, Lord Aufchamp, Count Colliano, John Lake Fielding, and Lady Ann Brixworth, and, by a strength of colouring, rendered ignominious and detestable. In opposition, however, to this despicable and unhappy group, we must not forget to mention the character of Lindsay, which exhibits the most perfect description of real friendship and disinterested affection. The work contains a few *episodes*, the most beautiful of which is the

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Critical Review, June 1798.

